BHANDARA



Photo. Etching.

ROADWAY CROSSING THE WAINGÀNGA AT BHANDARA

Roorkee College.

CENTRAL PROVINCES DISTRICT GAZETTEERS

BHANDARA DISTRICT

VOLUME A

DESCRIPTIVE

EDITED BY R. V. RUSSELL, I.C.S.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

The extant Settlement Reports on the Bhandāra District are those of Mr. A. J. Lawrence (1867) and of Mr. A. B. Napier (1902). Mr. Lawrence's Report contains some historical and other material, which has been reproduced in the *Gazetteer*. Mr. Napier's remarks on the agricultural castes and on trade and other subjects have been included, and the tahsīl and zamīndāri articles are based on his reports in the Settlement Annexures. The Chapter on Agriculture has been contributed by Mr. E. Danks, Deputy Commissioner of Bhandāra, and that on General Administration by Mr. E. Danks and Mr. G. A. Khān, Assistant Commissioner. Mr. R. H. MacNair has furnished the description of a Bhandāra village. The section on Geology has been contributed by Mr. P. N. Datta of the Geological Survey and that on Minerals is based on materials supplied by Mr. Datta, and on Mr. L. Leigh Fermor's Monograph on the Manganese Mining Industry. The notices of trees in the section on Botany were contributed by the late Mr. J. J. Hobday of the Forest Department and the remaining paragraphs are quoted from Mr. C. E. Low's Gazetteer of the Bālāghāt District, from which extracts have also been made elsewhere in this volume. For the interesting notices of wild animals and birds the writer is indebted to Mr. W. A. Tucker, Extra Assistant Commissioner. He must as usual acknowledge his obligations to Mr. Hīra Lāl, Assistant Gazetteer Superintendent. Mr. Danks has read the proof and offered several suggestions based on his knowledge of the District.

NAGPUR:
1st July 1907.

R. V. R.

BHANDARA DISTRICT GAZETTEER.

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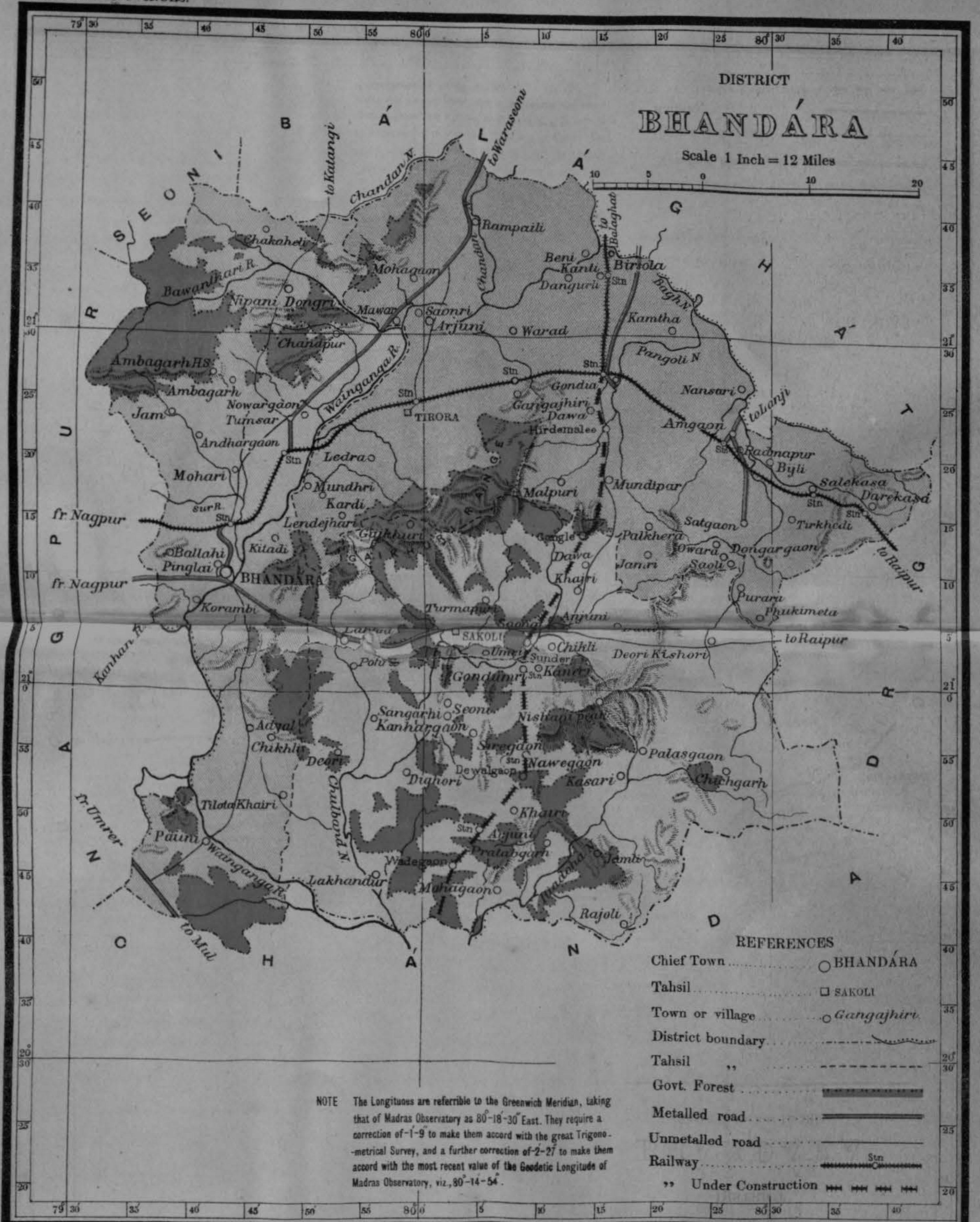
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List of the Deputy Commissioners who have held charge of the Bhandāra District since 1863.

Name of Deputy Commissioner.	Date of taking over charge.	Date of making over charge.
Mr. J. H. Master ...	...	...
Lieutenant C. H. Plowden ...	30-6-1863	15-7-1863
Mr. J. H. Master ...	16-7-1863	8-10-1863
Captain H. F. Newmarch ...	9-10-1863	3-1-1864
Mr. H. J. McGeorge ...	4-1-1864	26-10-1865
Captain H. F. Newmarch ...	27-10-1865	9-2-1867
Lieutenant J. W. Macdougall	10-2-1867	3-9-1868
Captain H. F. Newmarch ...	4-9-1868	9-2-1869
Mr. H. Read	10-2-1869	22-7-1871
Mr. J. W. Tawney, I.C.S. ...	23-7-1871	30-10-1871
Mr. H. Read	1-11-1871	19-3-1874
Captain W. Vertue ...	20-3-1874	6-11-1874
Major H. Lugard ...	7-11-1874	27-12-1874
Captain R. M. B. Thomas ...	28-12-1874	26-4-1878
Mr. D. O. Meiklejohn, I.C.S.	27-4-1878	25-7-1878
Captain R M. B Thomas ...	26-7-1878	21-2-1879
Major J. W. Macdougall ...	22-2-1879	22-7-1880
Mr. F. C. Anderson, I.C.S. ...	23-7-1880	29-7-1881
Mr. J. P. Goodridge, I.C.S...	30-7-1881	18-12-1882
Major T. A. Scott ...	19-12-1882	1-3-1883
Mr. W. A. Nedham ...	2-3-1883	14-3-1883
Mr. T. Drysdale ...	15-3-1883	30-11-1883
Major J. W. Macdougall ...	1-12-1883	28-5-1884
Mr. T. E. Ellison, I.C.S. ...	29-5-1884	11-9-1884
Mr H. H. Priest, I.C.S. ...	12-9-1884	16-9-1884
Major J. A. Temple ...	17-9-1884	13-9-1885
Mr. T. E. Ellison, I.C.S. ...	14-9-1885	5-4-1886
Mr. L. Gordon	6-4-1886	1-12-1886
Mr. J. W. Tawney, I.C.S. ...	2-12-1886	20-4-1889
Mr. A. S. Womack, I.C.S. ...	21-4-1889	4-4-1890
Mr. F. A. T. Phillips, I.C.S.	5-4-1890	2-11-1890
Mr. L. Gordon	3-11-1890	2-12-1891
Mr. A. D. Younghusband, I.C.S.	3-12-1891	9-7-1892
Mr F. J. Cooke, I.C.S. ...	10-7-1892	15-10-1892
Mr A.D. Younghusband, I.C.S.	16-10-1892	16-3-1893
Mr. H. M. Laurie, I C.S. ...	17-3-1893	6-8-1895
Mr. A. M. Brigstocke, I.C.S.	7-8-1895	11-11-1898
Mr. R. G. Pantin, I.C.S. ...	12-11-1898	14-3-1901

List of the Deputy Commissioners who have held charge of the Bhandāra District since 1863—(concluded).

Name of Deputy Commissioner.	Date of taking over charge.	Date of making over charge.
Mr. J. T. Chamberlain, I.C.S.	15-3-1901	12-4-1901
Mr. R. W. G. Marshall, I.C.S.	13-4-1901	3-6-1901
Mr J. T. Chamberlain, I.C.S.	4-6-1901	24-6-1901
Mr. R. W. G. Marshall, I.C.S.	25-6-1901	16-10-1901
Mr. C. A. P. Rogers, I.C.S....	17-10-1901	8-4-1902
Mr. J. E. Hance, I.C.S. ...	9-4-1902	14-4-1902
Mr. E. Danks, I.C.S. ...	15-4-1902	24-7-1903
Mr. F. S. Cowie, I.C.S. ...	25-7-1903	31-12-1903
Mr. W. J. Bagley ...	1-1-1904	19-2-1904
Mr. C. A. Clarke, I.C.S. ...	20-2-1904	19-10-1904
Mr. E. Danks, I.C.S. ...	20-10-1904	19-7-1906
Mr. G A. Khan, I.C.S. ...	20-7-1906	16-9-1906
Mr. E. Danks, I.C.S. ...	17-9-1906	2-3-1907
Mr. P. S. Patuck, I.C.S. ...	3-3-1907	...



Prepared specially for the Supdt., Gazetteer Revision, C. P.
from an original supplied by him.

BHANDARA DISTRICT.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION.

BOUNDARIES AND PHYSICAL FEATURES.

Position and boundaries.

1. Bhandāra is a District in the Nāgpur Division of the Central Provinces lying between 20° 40′ and 21° 47′ N. and 79° 27′ and 80° 40′ E. in the eastern portion of the Nāgpur plain and separated from that of Chhattīsgarh by the Sātpurā range on the north and by a line of broken hill and forest country further south. Through a narrow gap of plain between the hills on the north and south pass the Bengal-Nāgpur Railway and the Great Eastern road. It is bounded on the north by the Bālāghāt and Seonī Districts; on the west by Nāgpur; on the south by Chānda; and on the east by the Feudatory States of Khairāgarh and Nāndgaon. The area of the District is 3965 square miles and its greatest length and breadth are each approximately 75 miles. It is divided into three tahsīls, Bhandāra consisting of a long, narrow strip along the western border, while Tirorā occupies the northern and Sākoli the southern portion of the remaining area.

Hills.

2. The country is generally open and level, being broken only in a few places by isolated ranges of hills. The lowest and most northerly of these is the Ambāgarh range, an outlier of the Sātpurās, which enters the District from the west, and trending in a north-easterly direction cuts off the valley of the Bāwantharī river from the rest of the District. Soon after entering Bhandāra the ridge is crowned by the fortress of Ambāgarh, fronting which and looking across a valley,

which here pierces the range, is a remarkable basaltic precipice with a sheer drop of some two hundred feet. In the centre of the District, running from the east of Bhandāra town to the railway near Gondia, is the Gaikhurī range, a cluster of low peaks surrounded by irregular forest country. The points of Khurā (2003 feet), Lendejharī (1490) and Jāmri (1712) are the highest. This range divides the valleys of the Waingangā and the Bāgh. Just west of Bhandāra the Ballāhi range, consisting of a few sandstone hills capped with granite, and overhanging the eastern road, forms a prominent feature in the landscape. Lastly, in the south-east lie the Nawegaon or Partābgarh hills, the highest part of the District. Among them under a seven-peaked mass, locally known as the hill of the seven sisters, is the Nawegaon lake, and on an outlying bluff of this cluster stood the old fortress of Partābgarh (1842 feet). The peak of Nishāni is 2314 feet high. In the extreme south-west near Paunī there is an isolated clump of hills, and in the north-east the Sātpurā range takes in the corner of the District formed by the Sālekasā and Darekasā zamīndāris. The forests generally cover and surround the hill ranges, but beyond the Partābgarh range there is a broad belt of jungle extending from Uwāra and Amgaon in the north round the eastern and southern border of the District to the Chūlband.

Rivers and tanks.

3. The main river is the Waingangā and practically all the others are its tributaries. The Waingangā enters the District on the north-east, and flows diagonally across it, until it passes within a mile of Bhandāra town on the south-west, its valley being comprised between the Ambāgarh and Gaikhurī ranges. After this it flows to the south, forming for a short distance the boundary between Bhandāra and Nāgpur, and then turning south-east again cuts off the small and fertile strip of Paunī from the rest of the District. Its width in the District is generally 500 yards but opposite Paunī it broadens to half a mile. During the open season it consists only of a



Photo Etching, Roorkee College.

THE WAINGANGA AT PAUNI.

small and sluggish stream everywhere fordable, and containing at intervals deep pools full of fine fish. At Tīdhi close to the confluence of the Kanhān there is a barrier of rock in the bed of the river, and above this is a fine deep reach. The principal affluent of the Waingangā is the Bāgh, which rises in the Chīchgarh zamīndāri south-east of the Partābgarh range, and flows almost due north for a course of 70 miles, forming for some distance the boundary between Bhandāra and Bālāghāt. It joins the Waingangā near Benī, being crossed by the new Sātpurā railway just before its junction. Another tributary on the left bank is the Chūlband which rises in the Gaikhurī range and flows south, crossing the Great Eastern road at Saongī where it is spanned by a large bridge. The Pāngoli rises near Tumsar and joins the Bāgh near Kāmtha on the border of the District. On the right bank the tributaries are the Chandan which flows past Wārāseonī and Rāmpailī and meets the Waingangā near Saonrī, the Bāwanthari flowing down from the Seonī District and joining it at Mowār, and the Sūr coming east from Nāgpur to a junction not far from Bhandāra town. The valleys of the Waingangā and Bāgh have been called the lake region of Nāgpur, from the number of large artificial tanks which have been built for irrigation and form a distinctive feature of the country. The most important are those of Nawegaon with an area of five square miles and a circumference of seventeen, and Seonī over seven miles round, while smaller tanks are counted by thousands. These large tanks have been constructed by members of the Kohlī caste, and, built as they were without technical engineering knowledge, form an enduring monument to the native ability and industry of these enterprising cultivators. The Bhandāra tanks were thus described by Sir R. Temple:—'Here a tank is not a piece of 'water, with regular banks crowned with avenues or rows of 'trees, with an artificial dyke and sluices and with fields 'around it. But it is an irregular expanse of water; its 'banks are formed by rugged hills, covered with low forests

'that fringe the water where the wild beasts repair to drink; 'its dykes, mainly shaped out of spurs from the hills, are 'thrown athwart the hollows, a part only being formed by 'masonry; its sluices often consist of chasms or fissures in 'the rocks, and its broad surface as the monsoon approaches 'is lashed into surging and crested waves.' The Sākoli tahsīl or southern portion of the District consists largely of hill and forest. Elsewhere the country is for the most part open and closely cultivated, and the expanses of rice and wheat fields thickly studded with fruit-bearing trees and broken by low flat-topped hills present a pleasant and prosperous appearance.

Elevation.

4. The elevation of the plain portion of the District varies from about 900 to 1300 feet. Bhandāra station is 937 feet above mean sea-level, Bhandāra town 858 feet, Tumsar 937 feet, Tirorā 984 feet, Gondia and Amgaon about 1095, Sālekasā 1128 and Darekasā 1313. The elevation of the western part of the Sākoli tahsīl is from 800 to 900 feet. Sondur is 876 feet high, Gond-Umrī 856 feet, and Arjunī 798 feet. As already seen the hills do not reach a very great elevation. The highest point in the Ballāhi range is 1327 feet. Rāwanwāra to the east of the small hill of Ambhorā is 1484 feet high. The heights of the most important points in the Gaikhurī and Partābgarh ranges have already been given.

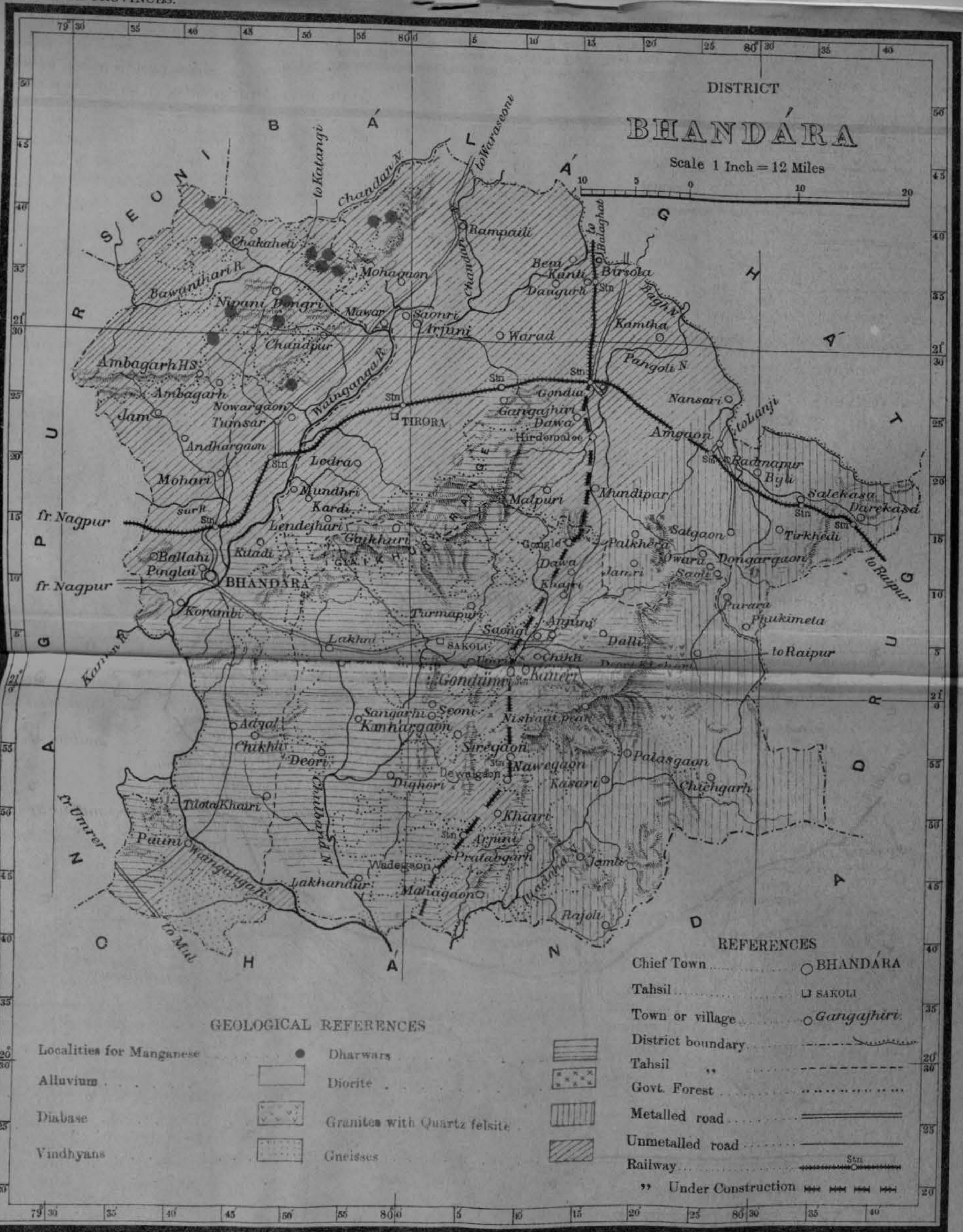
GEOLOGY. (P. N. DATTA.)

Geology.

5. Rocks occurring in the Bhandāra District may be arranged as follows, in descending order:—

Recent ... Alluvium. Laterite. Diabase.

Purāna ... Vindhyans.



Prepared specially for the Supdt., Gazetteer Revision, C. P.
from an original supplied by him.

No. 565 S. I.—Oct. 07.—500.

NOTE.—The Longitudes are referrible to the Greenwich Meridian, taking that of Madras Observatory as 80°-18′-30″ East. They require a correction of 1′-9″ to make them accord with the Great Trigonometrical Survey, and a further correction of 2′-27″ to make them accord with the most recent value of the Geodetic Longitude of Madras Observatory, viz., 80°-14′-54″.

Helio., S. I. O., Calcutta.

Archean	...	Dhārwārs. Granites with quartz-felsites, Diorites, etc. Gneisses.

Alluvium.—The only patch shown on the accompanying geological map is by the Waingangā, west of Lakhāndur (Lat. 20° 45′, Long. 79° 56′).

Laterite.—This occurs distributed, though in a capricious manner, almost all over the District, the rock being however better developed in some localities than in others.

Diabase.—The Nishāni hills lying close north-east of the Nawegaon lake are formed of an altered igneous rock (diabase). A similar rock forms the western half of the range running north and south just west of Deopaili (21° 4′, 80° 15′) and Mogrā (21° 3′, 80° 15′). Another outcrop runs north and south through Masulkasā (21° 3′, 80° 21′). The diabase is partly intensive and partly a surface flow. That it is younger than the Vindhyans is all that can be definitely said about its age at present.

Vindhyans.—The Vindhyans consist of sandstones, grits and conglomerates, with occasional subordinate bands of argillaceous and sandy shales. They exhibit a low dip, 10° to 15° being about the average, and are often thick-bedded and reddish or pinkish in colour. The main Vindhyan outcrops in the District are (1) 4 miles south by east of Paunī, (2) about Mahāsuli (20° 57, 80° 23′), (3) near Chīchgarh, and (4) one mile east of Deorī (21° 5′, 80° 25′).

Dhārwārs.—These consist of quartzites with secondary quartzitic sandstones, grits and conglomerates; haematitic quartzites or ferruginous sandstones, banded or otherwise; shales generally reddish, highly laminated, indurated and with a shiny lustre on the lamination planes, with minor bands of shales with hardly any alteration; argillites and micaceous and chloritic schists. The Dhārwārs generally show a high dip, being often vertical, and exhibit signs of induration and often of other metamorphism. The south-western quarter of

the District and its north-east corner prolonged as a tongue to the neighbourhood of Gondia are occupied by the main outcrop of the Dhārwārs in the District. The Partābgarh hills, the prominent range extending from Mahāgaon northwards by Nawegaon are also formed of rocks of Dhārwār age.

Diorite.—Among the important outcrops of diorite may be mentioned the one occurring two miles west of Nawegaon (20° 54′, 80° 9′) and another one mile east of Pālkhedā (20° 14′, 80° 20′).

Granites.—Granite associated with quartz-felsite occupies the eastern portion of the District, that is, the ground by Amgaon, Deorī (21° 4′, 80° 26′) and Kesāri (20° 53′, 80° 17′).

Gneisses.—These rocks comprise gneiss proper, with mica-schist, chlorite schist, hornblende schist and quartz-schist, with vein quartz and pegmatites. The whole of the District west of the line drawn from Nansarī (21° 26′, 80° 27′) to near Mahāgaon (20° 43′, 80° 7′) with the exception of the area occupied by the main Dhārwār outcrop, may be indicated as the gneissic area.

BOTANY.

Forest trees.

6. The following note on the forest trees was kindly furnished by the late Mr. J J. Hobday, Extra Assistant Conservator of Forests.

The forests of the Bhandāra District are composed of mixed, deciduous species which degenerate into scrub in localities where the soil and subsoil are unsuitable for tree growth The principal species of trees found in the District are the following:—Teak, whose uses are too well known to need description, is somewhat rare and is found only in small isolated spots, a few acres in extent, dotted here and there over the southern and eastern parts of the District. *Biulā* (*Pterocarpus Marsupium*) is an excellent timber for house-building and furniture construction, easily recognised by the yellow stain it produces when wet. This species yields a

valuable dark red gum commonly known as gum kino. *Tiwas* (*Ougeinia dalbergioides*) is a somewhat rare species; its timber is much valued for cart-wheels and shafts where strength and toughness are needed. *Yen* (*Terminalia tomentosa*) is about the most common species to be found in the District; its leaves when tender are used as cattle fodder, and the bark is employed by the local Chamārs for tanning. The gum is eaten and the timber is used largely for house-building and for agricultural implements. *Anjan* (*Terminalia Arjuna*) is a species found chiefly along the banks of rivers and streams, which also yields a good timber. *Harrā* (*Terminalia Chebula*) is a rare species in this District. *Beherā* (*Terminalia belerica*) produces a fruit somewhat inferior to that of *harrā* for tanning purposes. The kernel of the seed is eaten and somewhat resembles the almond. Its timber is of inferior quality. *Garāri* (*Cleistanthus collinus*)[1] is a very common species all over the District and its timber is much used for house-building and for agricultural implements, as it resists the attacks of insects. It also produces an excellent charcoal. *Tendū* (*Diospyros tomentosa*) is a fairly common species, producing a sweet and edible fruit much appreciated by the poor; its timber is also valuable. *Bis tendū* (*Diospyros montana*) is an allied species whose fruit cannot be eaten, but its timber is useful for house-building, cart construction and agricultural implements; the young leaves of this tree are very largely employed in the manufacture of cigarettes. Mahuā (*Bassia latifolia*) is a very common and very useful species, its flowers being eaten and also used for the manufacture of liquor. Oil is extracted from the seeds, and the timber is good and also produces excellent charcoal, much valued by the local blacksmiths. *Jāmun* (*Eugenia Jambolana*), or the black plum is a well-known species with a sweet edible fruit which is much appreciated by the people and is said to be useful in cases of spleen. The wood is utilised for wells as it resists the action of water for many years.

[1] Or *Lebidieropsis orbicularis.*

Chār (*Buchanania latifolia*) is very common everywhere, the fruit being eaten and the seed kernel, known as *chironjī*, being largely used as a sweetmeat. The timber is light and weak but is used for furniture. *Bel* (*Aegle Marmelos*) produces a fruit much used as a specific for bowel complaints. *Aonlā* (*Phyllanthus Emblica*) has a sour fruit which is eaten raw or preserved in sugar, and also as a medicine. The leaves are used for tanning and the wood as fuel. *Bhirrā* (*Chloroxylon Swietenia*) produces an excellent hard wood known as satin-wood, much employed in the construction of carts and carriages and of oil mills. *Khair* (*Acacia Catechu*) yields the astringent *katthā* or catechu which is extracted from the heart-wood by boiling. The timber is very hard and tough and is utilised for the manufacture of rice pestles, sugarcane and oil mills and of agricultural implements. It also gives a good charcoal. *Hewar* or *reunjhā* (*Acacia leucophlœa*) is a common tree on dry stony soils; the wood is an excellent fuel and the leaves and pods are much relished by camels and goats. *Kusum* (*Schleichera trijuga*) is a large and shady tree with exceedingly hard and heavy wood. *Sinhā* or *lendia* (*Lagerstrœmia parviflora*) is a tall, straight-growing tree, producing excellent timber. The flowers furnish much of the honey stored by the large jungle bee (*Apis dorsata*). *Haldū* (*Adina cordifolia*) is a very tall tree and produces excellent timber for building, furniture and agricultural implements. *Mundī* (*Stephegyne parvifolia*) is a tall tree and also yields a good timber *Dhaurā* (*Anogeissus latifolia*) is a large tree producing good timber, which is specially used for cart axles. Its gum is excellent, being almost equal to gum-arabic. The leaves give a tan and the flowers are an ingredient in Indian medicine. The bark is boiled and a dye of *khāki* colour is extracted from it. *Rohan* (*Soymida febrifuga*) is a large and valuable timber tree and the bark yields a red dye. *Semar* or *sawar* (*Bombax malabaricum*) is the Indian silk cotton tree. The seeds yield a silky cotton with which pillows are stuffed. The inner bark is employed

in Indian medicine. *Kamelā* (*Mallotus philippensis*) is a somewhat rare species used only for fuel. *Salai* (*Boswellia serrata*) is a very common tree on dry rocky soils. The wood is sawn into planks for building but is of inferior quality. The marriage-shed at a Hindu wedding is always made from this tree in Bhandāra. The gum exuding from cracks in the bark has a very fragrant smell and is said to be burnt as incense. It has been held to be the frankincense of Scripture. *Kīkar* (*Garuga pinnata*) is used chiefly as fuel. *Bahāwa* or *amaltās* (*Cassia Fistula*) is a small tree with very handsome pendulous racemes of yellow flowers and long pendulous pods whose pulp is used as an aperient in Indian medicine. *Kumbī* or *gongāl* (*Cochlospermum Gossypium*) is a small soft-wooded tree whose stem is much valued for torches and is largely used by villagers travelling on dark nights and by dâk runners. *Dhāman* (*Grewia tiliæfolia*) is a small tree with tough and elastic wood, from which cart-shafts are made; cordage is woven from the inner bark. *Mowai* (*Odina Wodier*) is a soft-wooded tree used only for fencing and fuel. *Bhilawān* (*Semecarpus Anacardium*), the marking nut tree, is a common species. The hypocarp of the ripe fruit is eaten raw or roasted, and the pericarp exudes, when pricked, an oily juice which is employed in Indian medicine as a caustic or irritant. The seed is administered to cattle as a cure for intestinal worms. *Palās* (*Butea frondosa*) is a very common tree all over the District, bearing bright scarlet flowers in February and March. The bark of the roots is much used for coarse cordage, and the flowers, locally called *tesū*, are collected and mixed with alum to form a yellow dye. The seeds are used in Indian medicine and the lac insect is very largely reared on the fresh young twigs. *Ber* (*Zizyphus Jujuba*) is common everywhere and its fruit is eaten by the people; the leaves make an excellent fodder for cattle, and the thorny branches are often used for fencing. *Erunī* (*Zizyphus Oenoplia*) is also common all over the District and is similarly useful. *Ghotī* (*Zizyphus xylopyra*) is another species which

is very common all over the District. The lac insect grows on this species as well as on *ber* (*Zizyphus Jujuba*). *Mājuphal* (*Helicteres Isora*) is a small tree whose fruit is used in Indian medicine. *Kūda* (*Holarrhena antidysenterica*) is a small tree, whose wood is used for fuel and the seeds, known as *indrajava* are given as a medicine for dysentery. *Selwat* (*Cordia Myxa*) has an edible fruit. *Gamhar* (*Gmelina arborea*) has a fruit used for medicinal purposes. *Karhu* (*Sterculia urens*) is a common tree on stony soils; the white gum which exudes from cracks in the bark is administered as a medicine to cattle.

Plants in cultivated land.

7. The following description of the plants growing in fields and waste places is reproduced from Mr. C. E. Low's excellent article on botany in the Bālāghāt volume of this series. In the open season nearly every black or brown soil rice-field contains the trailing green stems and round purple flowers of the *mundī* or *Sphæranthus indicus*. Another more troublesome weed, an import from America, is the *Xanthium strumarium*, which, however, does not flourish in transplanted rice to the extent it does in Chhattīsgarh. The fruit is a burr, and where it occurs, it makes a second crop quite impossible. Where water has stood too long are seen the long straggling stems and feeble yellow flowers of *Sesbania aculeata* called *dhandhanī* in Chhattīsgarh and *selambrī* in Hoshangābād, but boasting no local name that can be discovered. More open black soil fields usually contain the common green Indian spurge, *Euphorbia pilulifera*, mostly known as *dudhai* from its milky juice, and the *Blumea lacera*, the commonest Indian variety of the groundsel family. The *Gnaphalium indicum*, a pretty little plant with whitish woolly leaves and brown flowers, much like an English cudweed, is common in most parts of the District. A very troublesome weed parasitic on kodon, jūar and sugarcane is the *agia* (*Striga lutea*), very much like the English eye-bright; its roots attach themselves to those of the plant on which it feeds. There is a well known proverb:—

'Kodo men agia aur gaon men Bamnā' (as *agia* is in the kodon so is a Brāhman in the village).

The common village weeds are much the same as in other Districts. *Argemone mexicana* or *Vilāyatī dhotrā*, a plant with prickly leaves and yellow blossoms, an introduction from America, yields a black seed that is sometimes used for oil, though it is not regularly sold as in Chhattīsgarh. The two kinds of *tarolā bhāji*, *Cassia occidentalis* and *C. Torā*, grow in profusion from the beginning of the rains and are among the numerous unpleasant vegetables that help the villager's *pot au feu*. Most cottage gardens contain a specimen of the *Ocimum sanctum* or *tulsī* plant. Another species of the same genus, known in Chhattīsgarh and here as *memrī* and elsewhere as *mārwaorī*, is beautifully scented and its seeds make a pleasant summer drink.

Swampy spots below tanks and on the edge of brooks furnish two very common English plants, *Venorica anagallis*, the water speedwell, and *Polygonum glabrum*, with pink blossoms and spotted leaves. Sandy river-beds are usually covered by the *jhau* or *Tamarix indica*, whose thick cover is a favourite haunt of peacock. The village tanks contain two fine species of water-lily known as *kamal* or *kokumbā* (*Nymphæo stellata* and *Nelumbium speciosum*), sacred to the god Siva; the seeds of the latter plant are eaten as a nut while the white and succulent root stems are the villager's equivalent for seacale. *Trapa bispinosa*, the *singhāra*, is well known. Two very common water weeds found in most tanks and rivers are *Potamogeton indicus* and *Myriophyllum indicum*, much resembling the pond weed and myriophil of English rivers. Turning to the trees of the village jungles we find the mahuā (*Bassia latifolia*) common everywhere save in black soil. Its uses are too well known to need description. *Acacia farnesiana*, resembling the *babūl* but more sweetly scented, affords seeds which are used as goldsmith's weights. *Acacia leucophlæa*, a tall stout shrub or small tree with white blossoms, is common in most village waste lands; the *dichro-*

stachys with its spikes, partly of yellow, partly of red blossoms, is a particularly handsome shrub when in flower. The *Ficus glomerata* or *gūlar*, with its handsome peach coloured fruits, affords great joy to village urchins, who, as the local saying goes, eat it without looking inside, as it is usually full of all kinds of undesirable insects. *Anthocephalus Cadamba*, the *kadamb*, sacred to Krishna, a large tree with handsome yellow blossoms, is occasionally found. Its flowers are of great repute as a love charm. Among trees which are more usually found planted in or round villages or on roadsides, the *Dalbergia Sissoo* is important. The mango (*Mangifera indica*) is the leading fruit tree. *Eugenia Jambolana*, the *jāmun*, with its laurel scented leaves and plum-like fruit comes into bearing in the beginning of the rains. Most villages boast a specimen of the *ber* (*Zizyphus Jujuba*) while the *kabīth* (*Feronia Elephantum*), the *bel* (*Aegle Marmelos*) whose leaves are offered to Siva, while its kernels are used to make lime mortar set, and the tamarind (*Tamarindus indica*) are a little less common. The *bar*, *pākar* and pīpal, (*Ficus indica*, *infectoria* and *religiosa*) form the trees of assembly in the centre of the village, while their presence in the jungle usually marks an old inhabited site. *Hardwickia binata*, the *anjan*, like an English birch, is often found in roadside avenues. Oranges, bananas and guavas are grown in several villages and the custard-apple and *mungā* (*Moringa pterygosperma*) are commonly found in gardens and waste places in the village site. The *nīm* (*Melia indica*) is a common village tree, and its fruit is often used in medicine. The *Euphorbia tirucalli* or milk bush (*niurang*) with smooth leafless green stems and poisonous milky juice, though a denizen of Africa, is now commonly planted as a hedge. So is the *Euphorbia neriifolia* or *thuā*, though the ordinary prickly pear (*Opuntia*) is not common in the District. Another favourite roadside tree is the Cork tree or *Millingtonia hortensis*. The *champak*, also sacred to Siva, and the favourite abode of the sacred snake (*Michelia champaca*), and the *kumhī*, *Careya arborea*, both

flower-bearing trees, are often planted in village gardens. *Solanum indicum* with prickly leaves, purple flowers and yellow berries is found almost everywhere and with its kinsmen the *Dhatura fastuosa* and *Stramonium* rejoices in the rich soil round the village rubbish heaps.

Denizens of waste lands.

8. The beautiful little *Evolvulus alsinoides*, growing flat on the ground, with brilliant blue flowers of the colour of the English speedwell, is far the most attractive denizen of the village waste lands.

The *Echinops echinatus*, a singular prickly-headed plant with straggling stems and purple blossoms, is common both on waste and cultivated land and in all sorts of soil. *Oxalis corniculata*, the yellow bird-foot sorrel, a not uncommon English plant with brown green leaves and yellow blossoms, is to be found on gravelly soils.

Martynia diandra, the *bāgnak*, an American introduction, is common in waste places and field borders. It has a pretty pink blossom and a formidable double-clawed seed, while its oily smell and feel mark it as a near relation of the *tillī* plant.

Among the more ordinary parasites and climbers found outside the jungle are the *Orobanche indica* called *bhuttā* from its fancied resemblance to a maize cob. This infests most alluvial tobacco gardens. The *Loranthus longiflorus* with its mass of leaves and orange scarlet blossoms is found on most *chār* and mahuā trees and there is some reason to believe that it is increasing and seriously injuring mahuā trees in many parts of the country.

Finally, there is the beautiful *Cuscuta reflexa* or *amarbel* whose golden wire-like stems hanging from some tree is one of the most beautiful sights of the cold weather.

WILD ANIMALS, ETC.

Wild animals.

9. The following notices of the wild animals and birds of the District have been kindly contributed by Mr. W. A. Tucker, Extra Assistant Commissioner :—

ORDER—PRIMATES.

Macacus rhesus.—The common monkey of Northern India, extending up to an elevation of at least 5000 feet; this is the monkey so often tamed and made to exhibit various feats of agility. It is easily recognised by its flesh-coloured face and buttocks, which are naked.

Semnopithecus entellus.—The *langūr* or monkey of Hanumān. They are found mostly in forests and hilly tracts ; but not unfrequently take up their abode in large groves near villages, and plunder gardens and crops with impunity. Their long and slender limbs, long tail, and the black face with an eyebrow of long stiff hairs, pointing forwards, distinguish the *langūrs* from all other monkeys.—(Jerdon.)

ORDER—CHIROPTERA.

Pteropus Edwardsi.—The Indian fruit-bat or flying-fox. Found in gardens and groves close to villages, and is very destructive to fruit. The flesh is esteemed good eating by some and is consumed by many classes in Madras.

Cynopterus marginatus.—The short-nosed fruit-bat. Generally found on trees but not unfrequently under plantain leaves.

Phyllorhina diadema.—The large Malay leaf-nosed bat. Common in the passages of the Bhandāra fort, now used as the Government jail.

Hipposideros speoris.—The Indian horse-shoe bat. Common in the caves of the Partābgarh hill.

Megaderma lyra.—The Indian vampire bat. Found during the day in the roofs of houses, caves and old buildings. Very common in the Bhandāra fort.

Vesperugo Abramus.—The Indian Pipistrelle. This is one of the commonest bats in India. It lives chiefly in roofs of houses.

Nycticejus Temminckii (*Jerdon*).—The common yellow bat. Found during the day in sheds, temples, and



Photo Etching. Roorkee College.

SIDE VIEW OF NAWEGAON TANK.

hollow trees, and is one of the first to appear in the evening.

Kerivoula picta.—The painted bat. This is one of the most handsome bats found in India. The only one found by me was hanging under a half dry plantain leaf.

Taphozous longimanus.—The long-armed bat. I found several specimens of this bat in the caves of the Partābgarh fort.

ORDER—INSECTIVORA.

Sorex cœrulescens.—The common musk shrew, generally known as the musk-rat. I once found a house robin seized by one of these creatures.

ORDER—CARNIVORA.

Felis tigris.—(Marāthī, *vāg.* Gondī, *bhurkāl*). The tiger is not common in this District, though there have been two or three famous man-eaters within the last few years. During the rains tigers frequent the hilly tracts, while in the winter they prefer the beds of sandy streams and tracks running through dense forest.

Felis pardus.—(Martāhī, *tenduā.* Gondī, *chītah*). The panther is common in the District, and is very destructive to goats and village pigs. I know of three instances where they have been killed with sticks and axes inside villages.

Felis peringer.—The black leopard. This animal is not so bold as the panther, and frequents only dense jungle. I only know of two being shot in this District. It is not usually considered a distinct species from the panther.

Felis bengalensis.—The leopard cat. Found in heavy grass jungle mixed with forest and brushwood. This animal is very difficult to tame and is very destructive to small game.

Felis torquata.—The spotted wild cat. Looks just like the domestic cat and is found close to villages.

Felis chaus.—The common jungle cat. This cat frequents scrub jungle and is very partial to long grass and reeds. I came across one with a couple of kittens and she made my terrier run when he tried to worry her.

Felis jubata.—The hunting leopard. I have only seen one in this District, which was shot by a native *shikāri.*

Hyæna striata.—The striped hyæna. Common in the District. It is a cowardly animal and shows but little fight when brought to bay.

Viverra malaccensis.—The lesser civet-cat. Lives chiefly in holes in the ground and under rocks; but is not infrequently found in drains in gardens.

Paradoxurus musanga.—The common tree-cat. Common in the District. I killed one which had taken up its lodgings in one of my outhouses.

Herpestes malaccensis.—The Bengal mongoose. This is the mongoose commonly tamed by snake charmers and made to fight with a snake as an exhibition. It gets very tame but is very destructive to poultry.

Herpestes Smithii.—The ruddy mongoose. I have frequently come across this mongoose while seated over tiger kills. On one occasion I saw one take a few bites out of a bullock which had been killed by a tiger. It however did not seem to care for the meat; probably because it was a day old. It lives in dense forest, in holes along the banks of streams, and feeds chiefly on mole crickets, digging them out of the damp sand.

Canis aureus.—The jackal. Common all over India.

Cuon rutilans.—The wild dog. Very common in this District and very destructive to game. While out in search of tiger pugs, I once saw a pack of six run down a young sow. They gave tongue when they roused the sounder in a nullah close to me, but stopped yelping after they had gone a short distance. My *shikāri* the same evening came across the pack eating the sow about a mile from where I had met them.

Vulpes bengalensis.—The Indian fox. Common in the District and gives excellent coursing with fox-terriers.

Ursus labiatus.—The Indian black bear. Lives chiefly on white-ants and larvæ which it digs out of the ground. They get very tame but are dangerous to keep after a year or two.

ORDER—RODENTIA.

Pteromys oral.—The large brown flying-squirrel. Lives in holes in trees during the day and comes out to feed at dusk. When passing from tree to tree it leaps from the higher branches and gradually descends with its parachute open to the trunk or end of the branch of the tree to which its flight is directed.

Sciurus palmarum.—The palm squirrel, or common striped squirrel. Very common in groves, gardens, and in avenues of trees along roads. It not unfrequently lives among the rafters of houses.

Sciurus tristriatus.—The jungle striped squirrel. It is very similar in appearance to the common squirrel. It is found generally on mahuā trees and is distinguishable from the common squirrel by its peculiar metallic call.

Hystrix leucura.—The Indian porcupine. Feeds on roots and vegetables, and is very destructive to gardens and crops.

Lepus ruficaudatus.—The common Indian hare. Not very plentiful in this District; found chiefly in grass and bushes.

ORDER—RUMINANTIA.

Bos gaurus.—The *gaur* or Indian bison. (Marāthī, *rān-halā*. Gondī, *kherā-bodā*). The *gaur* is not common in this District. It keeps to hills covered with dense bamboo jungle and high grass. At the commencement of the rains they feed in the valleys on the newly sprouted grass.

Bos bubalus.—The buffalo. I have never come across any and have only heard of one being shot in this District.

Boselaphus tragocamelus.—The *nīlgai* or blue-bull. The habits of the blue-bull in this District are very much like those of the sāmbhar. It is very shy and keeps to dense jungle.

Tetraceros quadricornis.—The four-horned antelope. Common in this District although seldom seen. It haunts thin forest and keeps chiefly to undulating or hilly ground.

Antilope cervicapra.—The Indian antelope or black-buck. Not common in this District and their horns do not grow to any great length. Found mostly in the north-eastern portion of the District.

Gazella Bennettii.—The Indian gazelle or *chinkāra*. The habits of the *chinkāra* in this District are quite different from those found in the cultivated parts of the United Provinces and Punjab. Here it is entirely a jungle animal and its haunts are those of the four-horned antelope.

Cervulus muntjac.—The rib-faced or barking deer. I have seen this animal frequently in parts of the Gaikhuri and Partābgarh ranges. It is usually found solitary or in pairs and keeps to dense cover.

Cervus unicolor.—The sāmbhar or *rūsa* deer. Common on all the large ranges in the District. The habits of the sāmbhar are nocturnal; it may be seen feeding in the morning and evening but it chiefly grazes at night. I have not heard of any being shot in this District with exceptionally large horns.

Cervus axis.—The spotted deer. The spotted deer in this District is chiefly found in the flat park-like jungles bordering large streams.

Tragulus Meminua.—The Indian Chevrotain or mouse deer. This pretty little animal is probably fairly common in certain parts of Bhandāra; but owing to its shyness is not often seen. It never ventures into open country, but keeps among rocks and crevices in dense forest.

Birds.

10. The principal game birds of the District are the following:—

Pterocles fasciatus.—The painted sand-grouse. Found in all parts of the District in the neighbourhood of dry, low, rocky, bush-clad or sparingly wooded hills, and in forest tracts in which the ground is stony and a good deal broken up by ravines.

Pterocles exustus.—The common sand-grouse. This bird is very rare in Bhandāra District. I have only come across a few in the Tirorā tahsīl and shot a solitary one which was feeding near some golden plover on a plain close to Bhandāra.

Pavo cristatus.—The common pea-fowl. Hilly and jungly ground, where dense cover exists with water and cultivation close at hand, is the favourite resort of the pea-fowl. It is not considered sacred locally, but on the other hand it is much sought after by the village poacher who possesses a rusty shooting tube.

Gallus ferrugineus.—The red jungle-fowl. This bird is very local in its distribution. I have only come across it in particular nullahs in the bamboo-covered hills on the borders of Bālāghāt and in the range of hills in the Chīchgarh zamīndāri of Sākoli tahsīl.

Gallus Sonneratii.—The grey jungle-fowl. This species is extremely rare and is only to be met with on the range of hills in the Chīchgarh zamīndāri which borders the District of Chānda.

Galloperdix spadiceus.—The red spur-fowl. Found throughout the District in hilly tracts covered with dense jungle. During the day they are but seldom seen and even with the aid of dogs are difficult to flush.

Francolinus pictus.—The painted partridge or southern francolin. The painted partridge, though closely resembling the female of the black partridge, which is not found in this District, differs from it a good deal in habits. It abounds chiefly along the banks of nullahs densely fringed with

scrub jungle and grass, and in dry uplands covered with scrub jungle. This species roosts often, if not generally, on bushes and trees.

Ortygornis pondicerianus.—The grey partridge. This bird is found in suitable localities throughout the greater portion of the District. It becomes very tame in captivity, and being of a pugnacious disposition is commonly used by the natives for fighting purposes.

Perdicula Asiatica.—The jungle bush-quail. The bush-quail is the commonest of the game birds found in Bhandāra. I have met coveys of twenty and thirty feeding on the side of the road and not troubling themselves in the least about passers by. They lie very close, suffering themselves to be almost trodden upon, and then rise with a sudden start and whirr which is very annoying if one is tracking up a wounded tiger.

Coturnix communis.—The common or grey quail. The common quail makes its appearance in the District about the end of October and stops till about the end of February.

Coturnix coromandelicus.—The black-breasted or rain quail. The rain quail is common from July till the commencement of the hot weather. Its call is quite distinct from that of the common quail, being louder. It is not prized for fighting purposes by the natives of this District.

Excalfactoria chinensis.—The blue-breasted or painted quail. The painted quail is extremely rare in this District. I have only seen one which I shot within the limits of the village of Kilwad.

Turnix taigoor.—The Indian bustard-quail. This bird is very common, being found chiefly in scrub jungle intermixed with patches of grass, and in gardens. The call is most peculiar, being a long continued purr or roll as if a tin drum were being beaten.

Turnix joudera.—The Indian button-quail. The button-quail is a very solitary bird and frequents moderately high grass patches and open grassy glades in forests.

Turnix Dussumierii.—The little button-quail. Found in patches of low dense grass especially in *palās* jungle (*Butea frondosa*).

Porzana maruetta.—The spotted crake. Found during the cold weather in dense reeds round the edges of tanks.

Porzana fusca.—The ruddy crake. Common in the District only during the cold weather. Found in the sedge round most tanks. Flies in a sluggish manner.

Anthropoides Virgo.—The demoiselle crane. A cold weather visitant which arrives at the end of October and stops till the end of February. Found chiefly in the south of the District along the banks of the Waingangā.

Sarcidiornis melanonotus.—The *nuktā* or comb duck. Common throughout the District. Found generally on large tanks in pairs. Very easily netted by means of decoys.

Nettopus coromandelianus.—The cotton teal. The cotton teal is not very good eating but affords fair sport, flying very fast when well on the wing and dashing rapidly in all directions, and at all angles.

Dendrocygna javanica.—The whistling teal. The whistling teal is very common in the District. It is a rather dull bird and very slow on the wing. Found chiefly in weedy tanks.

Casarca rutila.—The ruddy sheldrake or Brahminy duck. The Brahminy duck arrives early in November and leaves by the end of March. It is common along the banks of the Waingangā, and is generally seen in pairs squatting side by side.

Spatula clypeata.—The Shoveller. Only a winter visitant. Found in fairly large flocks on the banks of the Sūr nullah; is not a good table duck.

Anas pœcilorhyncha.—The spot-billed duck. A permanent resident, usually met with in pairs or small flocks on rushy weed-margined tanks with a fair expanse of clear water. It dives freely when wounded, and is very difficult to recover.

Chaulelasmus streperus.—The Gadwall. This duck is very common in the District. It arrives at the end of October and leaves by the middle of March. It is found in large flocks along with the red-crested pochard and pintail.

Dafila acuta.—The Pintail. The pintail although fairly common is one of the most difficult ducks to shoot. It is shy and wary, and leaves a tank almost at the first shot or the flight circle round and round well out of range.

Mareca Penelope.—The Wigeon. The wigeon is very rare. I have only come across one flock which were on the Jhilmilī tank near the village of Kāmtha.

Querquedula crecca.—The Common teal. Arrives early in November and leaves by the end of February. Usually found in tanks which contain a lot of wild rice. Affords very pretty shooting and is almost the best table duck.

Querquedula circia.—The Garganey or Blue-winged teal. The blue-winged teal is the commonest wild duck found in the District. It arrives in November and leaves by the end of March. It is very good eating and affords fairly good sport.

Fuligula fernia.—The Pochard or Dunbird. The pochard occurs as a cold season immigrant. It is usually found in large flocks on tanks well surrounded by rushes and reeds with a considerable breadth of open water in the centre.

Fuligula rufina.—The Red-crested Pochard. Arrives fairly late, about the end of November, and leaves by the end of February. Found in moderate-sized flocks from about ten to forty. When the duck first arrive they are easy to approach, but after they have been shot at for some time they become very shy and usually keep in the centre of a tank, well out of the range of a shot-gun.

Fuligula nyroca.—The White-eyed Pochard. Usually found in tanks bordered with high reeds in which they lie up during the day. When wounded they are very difficult to recover.

Fuligula cristata.—The Tufted Pochard. Commonly found on large tanks. They are very pretty to watch while feeding, when they turn upside-down and show their snowy white plumage.

Gallinago stenura.—The Pintail Snipe. The pintail snipe is by no means common in this District. It is usually found in twos or threes or singly.

Gallinago cœlestis.—The common or Fantail Snipe. Arrives in November and leaves by the end of March. The largest number seen by me were in some newly planted sugarcane fields which were being irrigated at the time and in which the sugarcane had only just begun to sprout.

Gallinago gallinula.—The Jack Snipe. Not very plentiful. They lie very close, at times almost allowing themselves to be crushed by the foot. They are solitary in their habits and fly very feebly as compared with the common snipe.

Rostratula capensis.—The Painted Snipe. The painted snipe is rarely met with. It is a very handsome bird but is not considered as a delicacy for the table.

Statistics of deaths from wild animals.

11. During the fifteen years ending 1905 an average number of 18 persons annually were killed by wild animals, while 50 perished from snake-bite. During the same period 9 tigers, 18 panthers and 4 bears were annually destroyed.

RAINFALL AND CLIMATE.

Rainfall.

12. Rainfall is registered at the three tahsīl headquarters of Bhandāra, Tirorā and Sākoli. The average annual fall at each station for the 39 years ending 1905-06 was Bhandāra 53, Tirorā 49 and Sākoli 55 inches, and the mean of the three stations which is called the District average was 52 inches. The Tirorā tahsīl, situated in the open country in the north of the District, receives the least rainfall and suffers most in years

of drought. During the last 39 years, the wettest season was 1890-91 when the District average was 76 inches, and the driest 1899-00 when the mean of the three stations was 26½ inches. In the same period the annual fall has been below 40 inches in 7 years, and above 50 inches in 25 years. Between 1870 and 1875 the average for five successive years was only 42 inches and for three years of the same period 38 inches. As a rule 49 inches are received in the five wet months from June to October and three inches in the remaining seven dry months. The average for September and October is nearly 10½ inches, but this season, the most critical for the ripening rice crop, is especially liable to fluctuation in rainfall, and the amount received during the two months was below 8 inches fifteen times in 39 years. In thirteen years during the same period the fall in October was below half an inch. A bumper rice crop, Mr. Napier says, is a comparatively rare occurrence, so much so that at the time of his settlement the people still spoke of the good crop of 1869, nearly 30 years before.

Climate.

13. No observations are taken officially of the temperature at Bhandāra, but in the opinion of most people it is believed to be somewhat if not much cooler than Nāgpur. The nights, if the sky is clear, are nearly always cool. In the winter the nights are cold, though it probably never actually freezes. During the monsoon the climate is cool and agreeable. The District is not unhealthy as compared with others, but it has been given a bad name among native officials on account of the feverishness of one or two stations, and especially Sākoli. Fevers prevail as is natural in a damp country, where the rainfall is heavy, the forests extensive and a large area is under rice cultivation. The open country to the west of the Waingangā is comparatively healthy, but to the south and east fever makes great ravages during the months of September and October and even as late as December.

CHAPTER II.

HISTORY AND ARCHÆOLOGY.

HISTORY.

Early history—The shepherd kings.

14. Nothing is known of the early history of the District, but in Bhandāra as elsewhere in the Nāgpur country local tradition tells of the dominance of the Gaolīs. To these Gaolīs the old cromlechs of stone found in several places in the Nāgpur country are attributed. The only ones existing in the Bhandāra District are at Tilotā Khairī. Hislop describes them as follows:—'The vestiges 'of an ancient Scythian race in this part of India are very 'numerous. They are found chiefly as barrows surrounded 'with a circle of stones, and as stone boxes which when 'complete are styled kistvaens and, when open on one side, 'cromlechs. The kistvaens if not previously disturbed have 'been found to contain stone coffins and urns[1].' If these remains in truth belong to a race of nomadic herdsmen who spread over the country and reduced it to subjection, they may have been immigrants from Central Asia like the Sakas who were living in India—at about the same period—and who are thus described by V. A. Smith[2]:—'The Sakas, the Se '(Sek) of Chinese historians, were a horde of pastoral 'nomads, like the modern Turkomans, occupying territory to 'the west of the Wu-sun horde, apparently situated between 'the Chu and Jaxartes rivers, to the north of the Alexander 'mountains. About 160 B. C., they were expelled from their 'pasture grounds by another similar horde, the Yueh-chi, 'and compelled to migrate southwards. They ultimately 'reached India, but the road by which they travelled is not 'known with certainty. Princes of Saka race established

1 Quoted in Wardhā Settlement Report, 1867, page 21.
2 Early History of India, page 186.

'themselves at Taxila in the Punjab and Mathurā on the 'Jumna, where they displaced the native Rājās and ruled 'principalities for several generations, assuming the ancient 'Persian title of Satrap. Probably they recognised Mithra-'dates I (174—136 B C.) and his successors, the early kings 'of the Parthian or Arsakidan dynasty of Persia as their 'overlords. Another branch of the horde advanced further 'to the south, presumably across Sind, which was then a well 'watered country, and carved out for themselves a dominion 'in the peninsula of Surāshtra or Kāthiāwār, and some of 'the neighbouring districts on the mainland.' V. A. Smith, however, gives no information as to the origin of the Abhīras, and the only thing that can be said about the local stories connecting them with the old stone barrows and circles is that they may be true. The Purānas mention ten princes of the Abhīra dynasty as ruling in Nāsik and Khāndesh[1], and so late as the twelfth century the Abhīras of Gujarāt are said to have been destroyed by an invasion of a Yādava king [2]. The fact that nothing more is known of them is disappointing, as they are the only rulers preceding the Gonds of whom any general tradition still exists in this part of the Province.

Early Rājput dynasties.

15. It is possible that the District was included in the seventh century in the territories of the Haihaya Rājput kings of Chhattīsgarh whose kingdom was known as Mahā Kosala. This conjecture is based on the fact that the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsiang visited the kingdom of Kosala in A.D. 639 and the place he went to is identified by General Cunningham as Chānda [3]. If this theory is correct, Chānda and all the south of the Central Provinces must have been included in the Chhattīsgarh kingdom as indeed they are shown to be on General Cunningham's map. So far as is known however there is no other evidence, and the theory is in the last degree hypothetical. A copper-plate grant has recently been dis-

[1] Bombay Gazetteer, Volume I, Part II, page 177.
[2] Ibidem, page 240.
[3] Cunningham's Ancient Geography of India, page 520.

covered at Ragholī in the Bālāghāt District by Mr. C. E. Low, Deputy Commissioner, and a translation and commentary on this has been published by Mr. Hīra Lāl, Assistant Gazetteer Superintendent. This grant speaks of a line of kings who possessed the whole of the Vindhya, a name which formerly included the Sātpurā hills. The plate is undated but may be held on palæographic grounds to belong to the eighth century. These kings had, it is stated, made war with the kings of Gujarāt, Bengal, Bihār and Benares, and had settled in the Vindhya country, making Shrī Vardhanpur their capital. Their family name was Shail, which means 'a mountain.' All the names of the kings given in the Ragholī plate end in *vardhan* and their capital town is spoken of as Srī Vardhanpur. On this ground Mr. Hira Lāl conjectures that Nagardhan near Rāmtek, the old form of which was Nandivardhan, may have been founded by a king belonging to the dynasty. Nagardhan was a place of importance in ancient times, as is shown by the mention of the Nāgapura-Nandivardhana District in a copper-plate grant of the Rāshtrakūta kings found at Deolī in Wardhā and dated 940 A. D. Local tradition in Bhandāra retains some recollection of Hindu kings who ruled from Nagardhan. Nothing else at all is known of the Shail kings, however, and any theory concerning them must be based on pure conjecture.

The Ponwārs.

16. At the end of the tenth century a part of Bhandāra may have been included in the dominions of the Pramaras or Ponwārs of Mālwā. The Prashasti or stone inscription of Sītābaldī, dated 1104-1105 A.D., mentions one Lakshma Deva who is supposed to have been a viceroy at Nāgpur for the Mālwā king[1]. It is possible that the existing Ponwār caste of Nāgpur and Bhandāra, who have obviously been settled in the Province for a long period and have abandoned the customs of Rājputs, are a relic of the temporary dominance

[1] Central Provinces Gazetteer (1870), Introduction, page 110. Dr. Kielhorn, however, considers (Epigraphia Indica, Volume Ii, Part 12, page 180) that he was himself king of Mālwā.

of the kings of Mālwā. We know also that princes of this line penetrated to Berār and the Godāvari and even to the Carnatic in the pursuit of conquest. The only evidence for holding that Bhandāra was included in their territories is the residence of a large number of Ponwārs in the District at present, but it is possible that the caste may have emigrated eastwards from Nagardhan in later times. According to their own traditions their first settlement was at Nagardhan in Nāgpur, already mentioned in connection with the Shail kings. The domination of the Ponwārs must in any case have been of short duration, for less than a century later the Ratanpur inscription[1] of the Haihayavansī king Jājalladeva dated in 1184 A.D. states that the chiefs of Wairāgarh, Lānjikā, Bhānāra and other places paid tribute or gave presents to that king. Lānjikā is the old name of Lānji and Bhānāra is still used locally as a variant for Bhandāra. Who these chiefs were is not known, but if they were not Gonds, they were subsequently ousted by Gond chiefs who asserted their independence of the Ratanpur dynasty.

The Deogarh Gond kingdom.

17. The history of Bhandāra as of most other Districts of the Province is practically blank between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries. During this period the old Rājput dynasties, whose existence is known from inscriptions and from the ruins of their temples, disappeared and were probably supplanted by petty Gond chiefs who left no record or other monument. Of Bhandāra nothing more is known until the end of the seventeenth century, when Bakht Buland, the Gond prince of Deogarh in Chhindwāra, incorporated a portion of the District within his dominions. Sāngarhī and Partābgarh were acquired for him by Rāj Khān, a Pathān adventurer, whom Bakht Buland had made governor of Dongartāl in Seonī. The possessions of the Deogarh Rājās embraced the north of the District from Ambāgarh to Tirorā, while the Lānji hills and the lowlands of Hattā and

[1] Epigraphia Indica, Volume I, page 32.

Kāmtha were held by the Garhā-Mandlā Gond dynasty and Paunī and Nawegaon by the Chānda kings. The zamīndār of Chīchgarh still holds a *sanad* or grant from a king of Chānda, and the zamīndār of Turmāpurī formerly had a patent from Rām Shāh, a Rājā of Mandlā, dated in 1732 A. D., and conferring the estate on his ancestor on *mukāsa* tenure in return for an annual payment of Rs. 100.[1] Bakht Buland's reign was an era of great improvement. Industrious settlers from all quarters were invited to Gondwāna, many towns and villages were founded, and agriculture, manufactures and even commerce made a considerable advance. Bhandāra was not at this time a valuable appanage. There were some fertile lands in the alluvial tracts of the Waingangā and Bāgh rivers and the town of Paunī was even then celebrated for the excellence of its cotton fabrics. But the centre and east of the District were covered by dense forest and tenanted only by wild animals and forest tribes. The large and valuable zamīndāri of Kāmtha, now paying a revenue of Rs. 55,000, was first granted in the middle of the eighteenth century on a payment of Rs. 60 annually.

The Bhonsla kingdom.

18. Bakht Buland was succeeded by Chānd Sultān who removed his capital to Nāgpur and considerably extended his dominions to the east of the Waingangā. On his death in 1739 Walī Shāh, an illegitimate son of Bakht Buland, siezed the vacant throne, and Chānd Sultān's widow called in Raghujī Bhonsla from Berār to the support of her sons Burhān Shāh and Akbar Shāh. The usurper was put to death and Raghujī retired to Berār, receiving as the price of his assistance 11 lakhs of rupees in cash and several parganas on the Waingangā. In 1743 dissensions between the two brothers led again to Raghujī's intervention, and on this occasion he established himself at Nāgpur, reducing the Gond king to the position of a puppet. Muhammad Khān, son of the Rāj Khān who had acquired Sāngarhī and Partābgarh for

[1] Sir R. Temple's Report on the Zamīndāris, page 34.

Bākht Buland, held out at Sāngarhī for three years in the cause of his former sovereign. And Raghujī, struck, it is said, with his fidelity, offered him the post of Dīwān of Seonī if he would give up Sāngarhī, to which he agreed. Bhandāra was included in the Nāgpur Bhonsla kingdom as the District of Prānt Waingangā. A reminiscence of the quarrels of Jānojī, the successor of Raghujī I, with the Peshwā, his rightful overlord, is preserved in a *tākid* or injunction formerly in the possession of the zamīndār of Palāsgaon, whose ancestor was ordered by Jānojī to plunder the Peshwā's army.[1]

Marāthā Government.

19. It is unnecessary to recapitulate here the history of the Bhonsla Rājās, as no important event connected with them occurred in Bhandāra. Up to 1803 the Marāthā administration was on the whole successful. The Bhonslas, at least the first four of them, were military chiefs with the habits of rough soldiers, connected by blood and by constant familiar intercourse with all their principal officers. Descended from the class of cultivators, they ever favoured and fostered that order, and though rapacious were seldom cruel to the people. Up to 1792 their territories were seldom the theatre of hostilities and the area of cultivation and the revenue continued to increase under a fairly equitable and extremely elementary system of Government. In 1803, however, Raghujī II was induced to join Sindhia in an alliance against the British. The confederate chiefs were decisively defeated at Argaon and Assāye and by the peace of Deogaon Raghujī was obliged to cede Cuttack, Sambalpur and a part of Berār. From this time Raghujī, nicknamed by his people 'The big Baniā', threw off all restraint in his unwillingness to show a reduced front to the world. The Districts were mercilessly rackrented and many new taxes imposed. The pay of the troops was in arrears and they maintained themselves by plundering the cultivators, and at the same time

[1] Temple's Report on the Zamīndāris, page 34.

commenced the raids of the Pindāris, who became so bold that in 1811 they advanced to Nāgpur and burnt the suburbs. It was at this time that most of the numerous village forts were built, to which on the approach of these marauders the peasant retired and fought for bare life, all he possessed outside the walls being already lost to him.

Attack of the Pindāris on Paunī.

20. Mr. Lawrence in his Settlement Report (1867) describes their attacks on Paunī as follows[1]:—'The town (Paunī) had 'extended so much, such a trade had 'again arisen, that Chimnā Bhonsla[2] thought it advisable 'to fortify its western face. The eastern walls on this 'side are still standing as is a small loopholed bastion— 'defences that were sufficient to restrain an oriental foe. 'Thrice the Pindāris, attracted by the fame of Paunī, swarm-'ed to its plunder. The first time, the inhabitants tried to 'put the river between themselves and their assailants; 'but they were overtaken and plundered in the dry sandy 'bed of the river. An old Shāstri, still living, describes 'how, making himself naked, he waited the coming of the 'dreaded and then unknown foe; but the Pindāri, catching 'sight of a woman with silver anklets, went after what 'seemed to promise a richer reward. On their second 'coming the Pindāris had it all their own way. Again they 'came; but, this third time, the men defended the fort. The 'Pindāris contented themselves with plundering the de-'fenceless suburbs; there was nothing to be gained from 'sitting down before even mud walls, the tactics of the 'Pindāri cavalry always consisting in rapid raids and in 'carrying off bloodless booty.'

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1 Paragraph 68.

2 This Chimnā Bhonsla was governor of part of Bhandāra and also led an expedition to Cuttack on behalf of the Rājā Mudhojī, whose brother he was. He was afterwards made governor of Mandlā with the title of Senā Bahādur.

Local Marāthā administration.

21. Mr. Lawrence gives the following information as to the administration of the District under the Marāthās.[1] There were ten Kamaishdārs or revenue subdivisional officers, but their jurisdiction and powers were not always the same. The parganas of Bhandāra, of Ambāgarh including the north of Chāndpur, and of Tirorā had each a separate Kamaishdār, who reported to and was under the orders of Dharmāji Bhonsla, a bastard of the royal house. This personage resided at Nāgpur; his duty appears to have consisted in selecting the fittest objects for oppression, and in knowing who had money and could therefore be made to disgorge. His cruelties were so great that the Rājā Appa Sāhib, in search of popularity and to secure an agricultural following, put him to death. He was known as Dharmāji Pindāri; and the word Pindāri was to a Marāthā ear a synonym for a ruthless cruel robber. In the same way the accessible portions of Chāndpur and the fertile plains of Rāmpailī were administered by resident Kamaishdārs under the guidance of Sālinkah Risāldār (Cavalry leader), who held them in jāgīr; and afterwards under an Ijāradār or farmer of the revenue known as Kothikar. This personage was subsequently manager of the camel and grain department under Raghujī III. The tracts to the south (Paunī excepted, which was at intervals united with Brahmapurī in Chānda) were under Kamaishdārs who reported direct to the palace at Nāgpur. It remains to mention the Lānji pargana to the east of the Bāghnadī, and Kāmtha lying west and north of that river. In this extensive tract there was, up to 1853, but one Government officer, the Kamaishdār at Lānji. Most of the area was in the hands of zamīndārs who were originally contractors for the entire revenue of large tracts. The country was generally wild and the local officer being remote from headquarters was comparatively unchecked. His jurisdiction extended over, besides what the present map

[1] Settlement Report (1867), para. 83.

shows, some of the tracts which now belong to the Raipur District. His domain was known as the Khaloti, that is the lowlands lying beneath the hills.

The Kāmtha family.

22. In 1818 disturbances took place in the District in consequence of the second revolt of Appa Sāhib, whose cause was embraced by Chimnā Patel, zamīndār of Kāmtha. Mr. Lawrence's description of the rise of the Kāmtha house, and of the rebellion, quoting from Sir Richard Jenkins, is here reproduced.[1] 'The 'founder of the greatness of this family was originally an 'agent of Raghujī Kārundah, an officer about the Marāthā 'court in Nāgpur, whose estate of Sondar, lying about 30 'miles east of Bhandāra, and 70 miles from Nāgpur, he 'managed. This village is situated on the military road to 'Chhattīsgarh. It thus happened that Chimnājī Bhonsla took 'this Kunbī agent, by name Kolū, with him to Cuttack. On 'the Rājā's return, while he gave to many of the Ponwārs 'lands to cultivate, to Kolū he gave general authority over 'the whole of Kāmtha, which, at that time, was an uninhabited 'jungle. He was to locate the settlers, to whom lands were 'given; he was to bring in others, and generally he was to 'exercise authority over this large tract. He and his vigorous 'son and grandson, Gondī and Chimnā, in the course of a 'few years, cut the jungle, planted villages, and sowed the 'seeds of a fine estate. Some villages they held in their own 'hands, to others they called in any likely man of whatever 'race or tribe. Here they delegated their authority to others 'whom they put up as *shikmi* zamīndārs (joint proprietors), 'they themeselves retaining the superior title of zamīndārs. In 'this way by force, or by persuasion, or by the circumstances 'of their own tenure, they exercised authority from the Lānji 'hills in the north, to the Bāghnadī where it crosses the Great 'Eastern Road in the south, over an area containing about 'one thousand square miles. They thus continued for 30 'years, from 1788 to 1818 A.D.'

1 Settlement Report (1867), paras. 92 to 96.

The Lānji Rebellion.

23. Kolū's eldest son had been Rām Patel, but he was put aside in the management of the estate and his brother Gondī preferred as the more enterprising character. In the same way the succession went to Gondī's son Chimnā to the exclusion of Rām Patel's descendants. To this exclusion from the family estates the latter were unwilling to submit and Chimnā found it necessary, before he could secure Appa Sāhib's consent to his predominance, to promise to pay a *nazar* or succession duty of three lakhs of rupees. To collect this money he had to resort to the usual oriental practice of squeezing his dependants and neighbours. He had for some time been ambitious of bringing under his control the Lodhī zamīndārs of Warad and he now proceeded to plunder this estate. Nerbhat the zamīndār fled to Nāgpur, and after some months Chimnā again ravaged Warad and seized Sukul Patel, Nerbhat's brother. He also attacked and captured the Kamaishdār of Lānji. This was the commencement of the Lānji rebellion described by Sir R. Jenkins [1] and by Colonel Valentine Blacker in his Memoir of the Marāthā War of 1817—1819. Their accounts are reproduced.

'The insurrection in the Lānji and neighbouring Districts, 'to the eastward of Nāgpur, was only inferior in consequence 'to that in the Mahādeo hills, from the latter being the posi- 'tion chosen by Appa Sāhib himself for his rallying point. In 'respect of resources and influence, Chimnā Patel, who was 'at the head of this insurrection, was of superior consequence 'to any of Appa Sāhib's partisans. He possessed a fertile 'territory of considerable extent, out of which he only paid a 'moderate quit rent to the Government; he had consequently 'amassed considerable treasure, besides having the reputation 'of possessing more left him by his father Gondī Patel, from 'whom the former Rājās could never extort it. And the 'whole of the neighbouring Districts from the Waingangā to 'the Lānji hills east, an average of about 50 miles, and from

[1] Despatch No. 38 of 10th January 1819.

'Katangī, the southern pargana of the Seonī Chhāpāra District 'to Partābgarh south, a length of about 80 miles, were possess- 'ed by a number of petty zamīndārs, accustomed to consider 'him as their chief, and who were united in his cause by that 'habit, as well as the incitement of Appa Sāhib's numerous 'agents. These districts were, besides, the residence of 'numerous families of the military class, particularly Musal- 'māns and Rājputs, who had retired to their homes on the 'dissolution of the Rājā's army, but were ready to embrace the 'cause of any adventurer who promised them bread. Chimnā 'was attached to Appa Sāhib from a sense of gratitude for 'having been released by him from confinement at his acces- 'sion to the regency, and from late favours accompanied by 'marks of confidence, which proved how much Appa Sāhib 'relied upon him and naturally disposed him to fidelity.

'Still, however, until the moment he broke out, his con- 'duct discovered little to lead to any suspicion against 'him, and his general character for prudence and quiet 'demeanour, his continued professions of obedience, the 'general tranquillity of the districts, and the good opinion of 'him entertained by Nārāyan Pandit, and other respectable 'people in Nāgpur, induced me to hope that the intelligence 'I received from time to time of his inimical intentions might 'be incorrect. At the same moment, however, that the arrival 'of the Arabs and other troops to the assistance of Appa 'Sāhib, obliged us to look particularly to that quarter, we had 'a call from Lānji for troops, which we were at that moment 'very ill-able to supply.

'The disturbances commenced by an attack on the 'Kamaishdār of Lānji and a party of *sebandīs* (sepoys), with 'which he was making a tour of the District. His person 'was seized, and his party either destroyed or dispersed. I 'immediately sent out the only detachment we had the means 'of forming, composed of about 800 Auxiliary Horse, prin- 'cipally Marāthās, 300 of the Nāgpur Brigade, with a 'Jemadār's party of the 6th Cavalry under Captain William

'Gordon. Having the Kanhān and Waingangā rivers to 'cross, which are both unfordable and particularly the latter, 'wide and rapid during the rains, when the whole country 'becomes almost a swamp, his progress was necessarily slow. 'The enemy attempted to oppose him on the Waingangā, and 'had seized all the boats on the river, which, however, were 'replaced from those on the Kanhān which runs into it, and 'on seeing the boats arrive, covered by the fire of small 'pieces of artillery, which had been provided from the 'neighbouring *garhīs*, they retreated, and the river was 'passed with considerable difficulty and delay from inefficient 'means, but no opposition.

Action at Nowargaon and taking of Kāmtha.

24. '[1]The enemy were at the time in possession of the 'fort of Kāmtha, from whence they 'overran all the neighbouring country. 'Captain Gordon, who was on the 'march to occupy that place and Lānji, found a body of four 'hundred men, Musalmāns, Gosains, and Marāthās, drawn 'up to oppose him, behind a deep nullah near the village of 'Nowargaon. He accordingly left his treasure and provisions 'under the protection of twenty-five regulars, all his match-'locks and his gun. With the remainder, consisting of 600 'irregular horse and 200 infantry, he advanced against the 'enemy, who had good cover in the ravines connected with 'the bed of the nullah. They fired at each other for about 'a quarter of an hour, after which the horse, in two portions, 'plunged into the stream, and gained the enemy's rear. The 'infantry, in the meantime, forded in front carrying their 'cartridge boxes and muskets on their heads, to save them 'from the water. About one hundred of the enemy were 'killed, and some prisoners were taken. From them it was 'ascertained that they were strangers who had been engaged 'in the service of Appa Sāhib, by his agents in the city of 'Nāgpur. This success was obtained with the loss of no

[1] The remainder of the description is taken from Colonel Blacker's Memoirs.

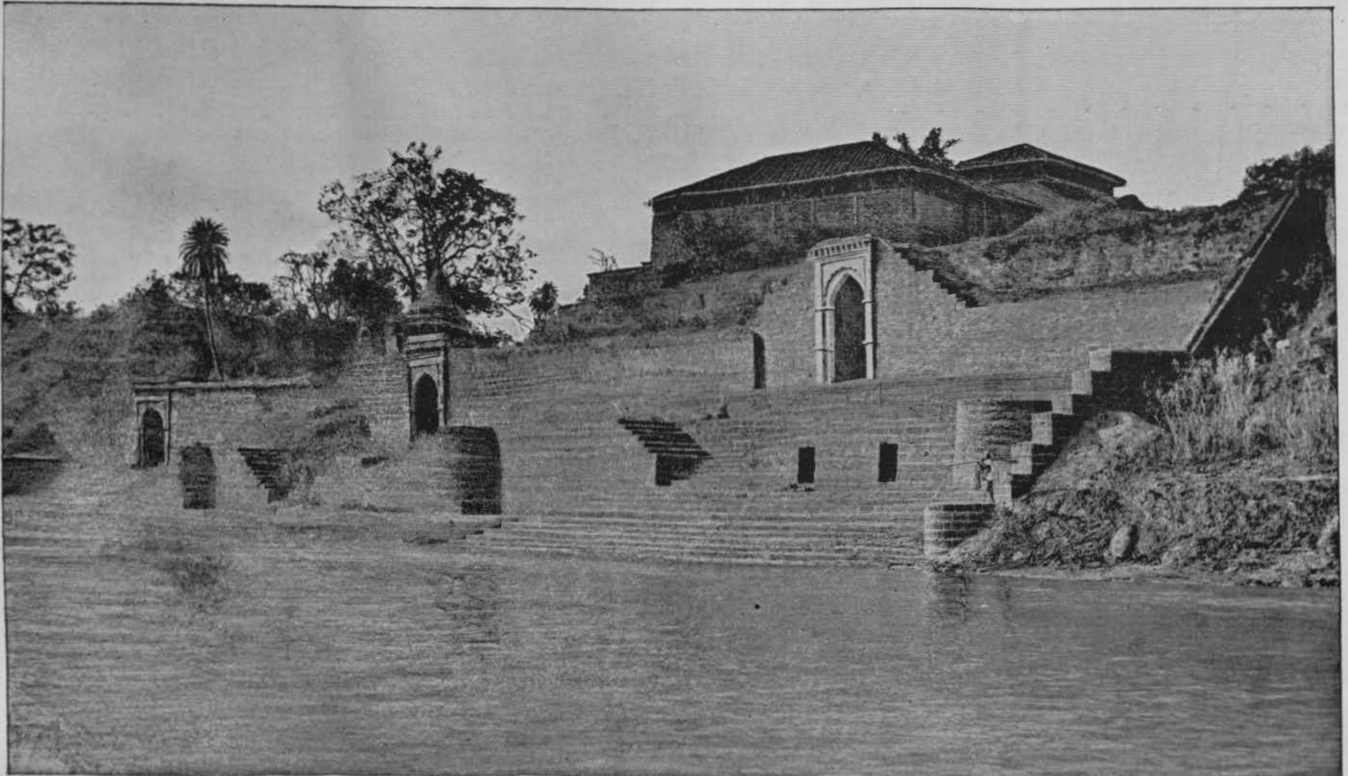


Photo Etching. Roorkee College.

DIWAN GHAT ON THE WAINGANGA AT PAUNI.

'more than four sepoys. Captain Gordon's progress towards 'Kāmtha continued to be so much impeded by the weather, 'that he was unable to arrive there before the middle of 'September. He was then reinforced by two companies of 'Native Infantry. As in the meanwhile the enemy had 'extended a chain of posts from Ambāgarh to Chāndpur, 'Rāmpailī and Singarhī, a second detachment was sent out 'under Major Wilson on the 17th. His instructions were to 'attack and dislodge all the enemy's parties along his route, 'to the most distant point of their line. But Captain Gordon 'proceeded to the attack of Kāmtha, before the arrival of the 'detachment, and his dispositions for this purpose were 'carried into execution at daybreak of the 18th. The town of 'Kāmtha is surrounded by a wall and partial ditch, and 'contains a small *garhī*, like most other Marāthā towns. To 'attack the town in the first instance the force was divided 'into three parties, of which the left, under Lieutenant 'Thuillier, was composed of one hundred and sixty Madras 'Native Infantry, and two hundred of the Nāgpur Brigade. 'The centre party consisted of a company of the same 'brigade, and a gun, and the right of matchlockmen, under a 'native chief named Anand Rao. The left column was 'provided with fascines, carried by every second man, and as 'they approached the ditch of the town, which was very 'contemptible, these were precipitated into it, and the 'troops passed over without difficulty. After entering the '*pettah*, they separated into two parties. One of these took 'the right and the other the left, and drove the enemy before 'them with much gallantry and some loss; while the 'fugitives, who took to the plain, were intercepted by the 'regular horse, from whom they suffered considerable injury. 'The enemy had two batteries in the town, one of which 'was opposed to the centre party, and the other to that on 'the right. Both these were stormed, as soon as the left 'column got into the town. The *garhī* alone now remained 'to be reduced and a gun was brought up to the gate to blow

'it open; but this falling, an elephant took its place, and 'forced open the centre barrier. There was still, however, 'another gate; but while the assailants were devising the 'means of forcing that likewise, the garrison surrendered, on 'the promise of personal safety. This was a very important 'success, as the *killedār* had much influence over several of 'the remaining garrisons of this quarter, whose submission 'he immediately promised. The number stated to have been 'in the town is probably over-estimated at two thousand 'men, of whom the loss was estimated at four hundred. The 'number of British troops killed and wounded amounted to 'sixty-one.'

Capture of Ambāgarh and Paunī.

25. Six days later Major Wilson with a small detachment arrived before the fortress of Ambāgarh which was garrisoned by 500 men. On a reconnaissance being made the garrison drew out of the fort to a neighbouring hill and subsequently fled without fighting. Major Wilson then proceeded against Paunī, and took this town by a successful assault described by Colonel Blacker as follows:—

'This place consisted of a partially walled town, having 'the gate on the south-west side; and in the opposite quar- 'ter a *garhī* in a dilapidated state. On the south side ran 'the Wainganga, where was a ferry of difficult access, except 'through the town. A ridge of earth covered the north side; 'and behind it the enemy were drawn up with a few small 'guns in disposition. The infantry were in two parties, of 'which that on the right was the 2nd Battalion of the 18th 'regiment of Madras Native Infantry, and the 6th Cavalry 'were opposite the gate; while the Mughal horse were des- 'tined to pass round the town, on the enemy being dislodged. 'When the detachment advanced their opponents fled into 'the town and were pursued through the street, at the same 'time that the cavalry were let in through the gate by the 'infantry who had passed over the inferior impediments. 'They made no further resistance elsewhere, but fled to-

'wards the ferry, and the *garhī* was scaled as the Mughal 'horse were endeavouring to overtake the fugitives, having 'forced a barrier gate. In this however they failed, from 'the intricacy and difficulty of the avenues; but a small party 'of them arriving at the edge of the ferry, a few of the enemy 'were there destroyed; and two boats, which were overload-'ed by the eager crowd, sunk with about forty of them; and 'were all drowned. Their entire loss was estimated at about 'one hundred and fifty, while that of the detachment amount-'ed to twelve killed and wounded.'

Subsequent history of the District.

26. The forts of Lānji and Hattā were then surrendered to Captain Gordon and the insurrection was at an end. Chimnā Patel was confined in his fort at Kāmtha and was subsequently a prisoner on parole in his villages of Nowargaon and Jhilmilī. After two years Captain Wilson granted him the zamīndāri of Kirnāpur, now in Bālāghāt, which had been a part of his former possessions. The Lodhī zamīndār of Warad was installed as manager of the Kāmtha estate, and subsequently in 1843 was granted proprietary right with the dignity of zamīndār. After the deposition of Appa Sāhib, a minor grandson of Raghujī II was placed on the throne, and from 1818 to 1830 the Nāgpur territories were governed by Sir Richard Jenkins as regent. During the greater part of this period Bhandāra or Prānt Waingangā was administered by Captain, afterwards Sir P., Wilkinson. The District at first consisted only of the northern tracts lying round Lānji, the remainder belonging to Nāgpur. Captain Wilkinson resided at Kāmtha till 1821, when the eastern and southern parganas were placed under his administration and he removed his headquarters to Bhandāra. In 1830 the District with the remainder of the Nāgpur territories was handed over to Raghujī III on the attainment of his majority and on his death in 1853 it became British territory by lapse. No disturbances occurred in Bhandāra during the Mutiny. In 1867 the Lānji, Bhandāra and Hattā tracts and several of the

zamīndāris were taken from Bhandāra to form the new Bālāghāt District.

ARCHÆOLOGY.

Archæology.

27. The oldest architectural relic in the District is a cromlech at Tilotā Khairī consisting of two upright slabs and a third laid across the top. These cromlechs are found in a few other places, the best-known ones being at Chāmursī and Keljhar in Chānda and at Sarekhā in Seonī. They were probably built by nomadic pastoral tribes, and the two villages called Korambī in the District may be derived from the Kuramwārs or Telugu shepherds. Cave temples exist at Gaimukh, Korambī near Paunī, and Darekasā. Old temples, most of them of the kind called Hemādpanthī and built without mortar, are to be found at Adyāl, Chākahetī, Korambī near Bhandāra and at Pinglai, a suburb of Bhandāra. None of these has any pretension to architectural beauty. There are a number of forts, the principal ones being those of Ambāgarh constructed by the Muhammadan governor of Seonī; Chāndpur and Bhandāra traditionally ascribed to the Gaolīs; Sāngarhī and Partābgarh built by the Gonds; and Paunī constructed by the Marāthās. The fort of Ambāgarh was used as a prison by the Marāthās, and it is said that criminals were sent there to be poisoned by being compelled to drink the dark and stagnant waters of the inner well of the fort. This fort and also that of Paunī were held against the British in Appa Sāhib's rebellion of 1818 and were assaulted and carried by storm. Jain remains are almost unknown, but some years ago a life-sized image of Pārasnāth, well carved in black stone, was discovered near Adyāl in excavating a foundation. Other old structures consist of a well at Brāmbi, the stone buildings at Padampur and Amgaon and some tombs such as those of Paunī. At Murmāri, 12 miles east of Bhandāra, is the tomb of an English lady which was formerly worshipped by the people.

CHAPTER III.

POPULATION.

STATISTICS OF POPULATION.

Area and population, density, towns and villages.

28. The area and population of the District in 1901 were 3965 square miles and 663,062 persons respectively. Bhandāra is the tenth District in point of area in the Central Provinces and Berār, or the seventh excluding Berār. In point of population it is seventh including Berār and fifth excluding it. The District is divided into three tahsīls as shown below :—

	Area. Sq. miles.	Population.
Bhandāra	1088	204,153
Tirorā	1328	291,514
Sākoli	1549	167,395

Sākoli tahsīl has thus the largest area and Tirorā the largest population. The total density of population is 167 persons per square mile as against 114 for British Districts of the Central Provinces. In 1891 the density was 187 persons and there is little doubt that the District could support a population of more than 200 to the square mile. Bhandāra is more thickly populated than any District in the Central Provinces except Nāgpur and Jubbulpore, where the density is increased by the inclusion of large towns. In 1901 the Tirorā tahsīl had the highest specific population with 220 persons to the square mile, the figure for Bhandāra being 187, and for Sākoli 108. Excluding the zamīndāris, the *khālsa* area of Tirorā contains 234 persons per square mile and of Sākoli 147 persons. The most thickly populated part of the District is the Bhandāra Station-house area with 270 persons to the square mile excluding Government forest, and next to this comes Tirorā 251, Tumsar 237, Paunī 229,

Gondia 219, Sākoli 131, and Nawegaon 78. The District contained three towns—Bhandāra (14,023), Paunī (9366) and Tumsar (8116), and 1635 villages according to the census returns. The village lists show 1811 towns and villages of which 1629 are inhabited and 182 uninhabited. The urban population in 1901 was 32,000 persons or nearly 5 per cent. of the total. Since 1872 the urban population has increased by 4000 persons or 12½ per cent. Bhandāra and Tumsar are flourishing towns, while Paunī is stationary or declining. Villages are larger in Bhandāra than in any District except Wardhā, the average being 76 houses or 380 persons. In 1901, not less than 17 villages contained a population of more than 2000 persons, these being Adyāl, Andhārgaon, Jām, Mohāli, Sihorā, Kardī, Mandhāri, Phulchur, Gondia, Sāngarhī, Amgaon, Dighorī, Lākhni, Nawegaon, Pohrā, Sākoli and Tirorā. The number of villages containing between 1000 and 2000 persons was 78.

Growth of population.

29. A census of the District has been taken on five occasions, in 1866, 1872, 1881, 1891 and 1901. Between 1866 and 1872 the Lānji, Dhansuā and Hattā tracts were transferred from Bhandāra to form the new Bālāghāt District. Since 1872 no transfers of territory have taken place and the only changes in area have been due to corrections of survey. In 1872 the population was 565,000 persons. It increased in 1881 to 684,000 or by 21 per cent. About half the increase was attributed to more accurate enumeration. The year 1878 was an unhealthy one, the number of deaths exceeding that of births. In 1891 the population was 743,000, giving an increase of 8½ per cent. on 1881. The natural increase deduced from vital statistics was nearly 13 per cent. The difference was partly accounted for by the fact that in 1881 the Chhattīsgarh State railway was under construction, and a large influx of outside labour had occurred, which subsequently disappeared. In 1891 the population of Bhandāra tahsil showed a decline of 2·3 per cent. on the previous

census, while that of Tirorā and Sākoli increased by more than 14 per cent. The decennial birth-rate during 1881—1891 was 43 per mille or the third highest in the Province while the death-rate was 30 or fifth from lowest. The years 1883 and 1889 were unhealthy. In 1901, the population was 663,000, showing a decrease of 80,000 persons or nearly 11 per cent. on 1891, as against an average of 8·4 per cent. for British Districts. Of the three tahsīls, the population of Bhandāra declined by 11, that of Tirorā by 13 and that of Sākoli by 6½ per cent. The registered excess of deaths over births during the decade was only 6000 and the difference between the census figures and those deduced from vital statistics was 73,000. There was considerable emigration during the decade to the more favoured localities of Nāgpur and Berār, but no statistics of its extent are available. The bulk of the excess of deaths must be attributed to defective reporting and its magnitude seems to indicate that the registration of vital statistics is somewhat unduly inaccurate. Bhandāra suffered from partial failures of crops in 1895 and 1896, and was very severely affected by famine both in 1897 and 1900, and the number of deaths exceeded that of births in these years and also in 1901. Since 1902 the birth-rate has been remarkably high and the death-rate low and the registered excess of births over deaths during this period was nearly 60,000, as against a loss of population of 80,000 persons during the decade 1891—1901. The deduced population at the end of 1906 was 722,000.

Population and cultivation.

30. The proportion of net cropped acres per head of population was 1·16 in 1891-92. In 1901-02 it had risen to 1·19 and in 1905-06 to 1·27 on the population of 1901. These figures substantiate, though not very forcibly, the general complaint of the scarcity of labour. Although the population has largely increased since 1901, no additional supply of labour has of course been obtained. As usual in a rice District, the area cropped per head of

population is very low as compared with the Provincial average.

Migration.

31. Just over 93 per cent. of the population were returned as having been born in Bhandāra in 1901, this proportion being the highest in the Province with the exception of Betūl and Raipur. Of the 41,000 persons born outside the District, 15,000 came from Bālāghāt and the bulk of the remainder from Nāgpur, Chānda and Raipur. Of about 68,000 persons born in Bhandāra and enumerated in other Districts of the Province, 24,000 had gone to Nāgpur, 22,000 to Bālāghāt, and the remainder to the adjoining Districts and Feudatory States.

Diseases.

32. In normal years the healthiest season of the year for the people is from February to June. They suffer much from malarial fever, which is the chief cause of mortality and is prevalent throughout the year but specially in the autumn months during and after the close of the monsoon. The southern and eastern tracts suffer most, and when Mr. Lawrence wrote his Settlement Report (1867), schools had sometimes to be closed, schoolmasters and scholars being kept away by the prevailing ailment. Of cholera Mr. Lawrence wrote: 'Of all diseases this is the most feared, and it would 'appear that it is to be a yearly visitor. From the year '1832 it has always returned, but of late years with more 'severity and more generally. The disease seems to be 'brought by the cartmen carrying grain from Raipur west- 'ward. It may safely be said that the spread of the disease 'is aided and its violence aggravated by the dirty habits of 'the people, the careless greed with which they devour quan- 'tities of unripe or rotten fruits, by the wild state of the 'country necessitating long marches, by the hot sun, by the 'scarcity of wells and the general custom of going on an 'empty stomach and slaking the thirst at every stagnant pool. 'Much has been done in the way of prevention, but still the

'fell disease yearly makes its appearance, carrying fear and 'trembling to hundreds of villages.' Between 1870 and 1900 epidemics of cholera causing more than 3000 deaths occurred in four years, and in four other years more than 1000 deaths were reported. Since 1900 the disease has almost disappeared, and though it broke out in 1906 among the coolies of the Gondia-Chānda railway the mortality was not severe. The efforts of the District Officers for the provision of new wells and the construction and repair of existing ones have, the Civil Surgeon states, had a markedly good effect, and the people have to some extent learnt the value of conserving the water-supply and the great degree of protection afforded by the disinfection of wells. Small-pox is almost endemic but is distinctly less prevalent than formerly, as the result of vaccination. Between 1870 and 1880 the annual death-rate from this disease was about 1·6 per mille, while from 1890 to 1900 it sank to less than ·5 and in the following years to ·2. Plague first appeared in Gondia in 1903, having apparently been imported from the United Provinces. A total of 470 deaths was recorded in that year. In 1904 there was an outbreak in Bhandāra town causing 502 deaths and a smaller one in Tumsar. In 1905 Paunī suffered most, having 85 deaths out of a total of 165. In 1906 Tumsar was attacked, having 31 deaths out of a total of 94. In 1907, up to March, Tumsar had 247 and Bhandāra town 79 deaths from plague out of 968 in the District as a whole.

Occupation.

33. Out of the total population 72 per cent. are supported by pasture and agriculture, this figure being nearly equal to the Provincial average. The number of personal and household servants is small, only 16 in a thousand being supported by this calling as against 24 on the average of all Districts. Servants are less generally employed in the southern than in the northern Districts, and the people here live in somewhat simpler fashion. Half of the total number of servants

are barbers and a fifth are washermen. A total of 47,000 persons, including dependents or 70 per mille of the population are supported by the provision of food, drink and stimulants, and of these the fishing industry, 22,000 strong, comprises nearly a half. Of the remainder oil-pressers and grain dealers are the largest groups. Textile industries support 53,000 persons or 80 per mille of the population, as against the Provincial average of 50 per mille. Of these 5000 are engaged in the silk and 41,000 in the cotton industry, while the bulk of the remainder are tailors or piecegoods dealers. About 15,000 persons or 22 per mille of the population are supported by working in metals and precious stones, of whom nearly 8000, including dependants are blacksmiths and nearly 6000 gold and silver-smiths. These industries are also much stronger than the average of other Districts. The brass-working industry only comprises 1000 persons. Nearly 7000 persons or about 10 per mille of the population are supported by banking and moneylending. No less than 24 persons are returned as witches, wizards or receivers of stolen goods. The apparently ingenuous nature of these entries is to be explained by the fact that the enumerators in such cases are police constables, who are determined that Government shall know the truth.

Language—Marāthī.

34. The principal language of the District is Marāthī, which is spoken by 515,000 persons or 78 per cent. of the population. The Nāgpurī dialect is used in Bhandāra, and it resembles in all essential points the Berār dialect. The following are some of its chief peculiarities. Long vowels and especially final ones are very frequently shortened; thus *mī* and *mi*, I; *mādzhā* and *madzhā*, my. The letter *v* is very indistinctly sounded before *i* and *e* and is often dropped altogether; thus *isto* for *visto* fire, *is* for *vis*, twenty, *Ithoba* for *Vithoba*, a god. In verbs the second person singular has usually the same form as the third person; thus *tu ahe*, thou art, for *tu ahes*. The habitual past is often used as an

ordinary past; thus *mhane*, he said, for *mhanālā*. The letters *l* and *n* are continually interchanged in the future tenses; thus *mī mārīn* and *mārīl*, I shall strike; *to māran* and *māral*, he will strike. The letter *i* is often interchanged with *e* and *ya*, thus *dilā*, *dellā* and *dyallā*, given; *il*, *yal* and *vel*, time. The Gowāra caste have a peculiar dialect in which the Marāthī of the District is somewhat influenced by Eastern Hindī, and the Halbās have also a dialect of their own. The Halbī dialect as spoken in Bastar, where the caste are found in greatest strength, is a curious mixture of Uriyā, Chhattīsgarhī and Marāthī. In Bhandāra, however, it differs little if at all from ordinary Marāthī.

Other languages.

35. The other languages spoken in the District are Hindī, which is returned by 90,000 persons or 14 per cent. of the population and Gondī spoken by 56,000 persons or 8 per cent. The bulk of the Hindī speakers are Ponwārs, who have a sort of jargon called Ponwāri for use among themselves. Its basis is the Baghelī found in Mandlā, mixed up very freely with forms coming from the original home of the tribe in Western Rājputāna and with Marāthī. The Gonds form 11 per cent. of the population and rather more than two-thirds of them still retain their own language.

RELIGION.

Religion—Village gods.

36. The statistics of religion show that Hindus constitute 88 per cent. of the population, Animists 10 per cent., and Muhammadans 2 per cent. There are 83 Jains and 319 Christians. The Gonds and Halbās, who are the principal forest tribes of Bhandāra, are comparatively civilised and inclined to return themselves as Hindus. As usual the villagers have a set of minor deities or godlings of their own, who in many cases impersonate animals or are spirits attached to various localities. Māroti or Hanumān is found in every village. Muthiā is the god of the cattle-stand and is represented by a stone

or a heap of stones where the cattle meet outside the village. On the Diwāli day the Gowāris dance and sing before him with drums. Sewārya is the god of field boundaries and is represented by a stone placed where three fields meet. He must be propitiated to secure the success of the crops and a goat or cock is offered to him before the winnowing of the rice harvest. Bhīmsen is a Gondī god but is also worshipped by Hindus. Pigs and other animals and liquor are offered to him with the object of averting disease and other calamities. Dulhā Deo is a household god and is supposed to reside in an earthen pot suspended by a string to the main beam of the house. The god is represented by a piece of metal or stone. He is worshipped once a year with great ceremony, only the male members of the family being present. The god is taken out and placed on a betel-leaf and offerings are made to him, and afterwards eaten by those present, the refuse being buried. One mālguzār relates that on one occasion when a woman was present at the worship of the Dulhā Deo in his house, the god vanished but returned on being propitiated with an offering. Belsamundar Rājā dwells at the crossings of rivers and streams. He is believed to be a young Dhīmar who was drowned while fishing and the Dhīmars make offerings to him when they go fishing or when the rivers are in flood.

Village priests—The Joshi.

37. The village priests are the Joshi, Gārpagāri and Bhūmak. The Joshi is a sort of priestly astrologer, who points out the lucky and unlucky days for commencing ploughing and sowing, and for all agricultural business of importance. He also officiates at births, deaths, and marriages and at religious ceremonies of all kinds. He is usually a Brāhman and has a *pothī* or almanac, the repository of all his knowledge. Formerly he held rent-free land, but now he is usually remunerated only by small presents of cash or grain in return for his services. When a man intends to sink a well, he goes to the Joshi, who

names an auspicious day and directs that the first clod is to be dug by some elderly member of the family, who must stand facing the east. When the well is completed, its marriage is celebrated by making an imitation of the *mandwā* or marriage-shed over it and tying *torans* or strings of mango leaves round the sides. The relatives and friends of the family then have a feast sitting round the well, and after that its water may be drunk. A similar procedure is observed when fruit-trees have been planted before the first fruit is eaten. Every Hindu has a plant of *tulsī* or basil in his yard, and a few plant the *aonlā* (*Phyllanthus Emblica*) and the *umar* (*Ficus glomerata*) trees The *umar* tree is held to be sacred because Dattātreya, an incarnation of Siva, dwelt under it. The *aonlā* is worshipped twice a year on the 14th days of Asārh and Kārtik, and is sacred to Vishnu. During the four months between these days the gods are held to be asleep and no marriages may be celebrated. For this period many Hindus abstain from sugarcane, brinjals, onions, garlic, radishes and wild plums. Then on the 12th day of Kārtik the marriage of the *tulsī* or basil with the *sāligrām* or sacred stone representing Vishnu is celebrated, and all these things are offered to her and afterwards consumed by the people.

The Gārpagāri.

38. The Gārpagāri's business is to avert hailstorms and other calamities from the crops, for which he receives a contribution of 3 *kuros* (60 lbs.) of grain a year from each cultivator. He also drives off locusts and other insects and cures rust. When locusts come he catches two of them and takes them to Māroti's shrine, placing them before the god; then he says 'Fly away, I shall make you an offering,' and with that the whole flight of locusts is believed to vanish. Similarly he offers a rust-laden blade or two to Māroti. Another method of curing an attack of rust is for a woman in her menstrual period to sprinkle ashes over the crop. It is perhaps held that the rust in the crop resembles the

menstrual period in a woman, and that this action will cause it similarly to disappear. To avert hailstorms the Gārpagāri places a stone on the ground and calls on Māroti to come and sit on it. He then draws a large circle round the stone to represent the sky and runs round the circle brandishing a sword and calling on the hail to disappear. He then supposes that the clouds will leave the sky. Occasionally the Gārpagāri steals a sheaf of corn from the field, and the owner dare not complain of him, as he is afraid that the Gārpagāri will retaliate by calling down hail on the crop.

The Bhūmak.

39. The Bhūmak or Pujāri is usually a Gond or Dhīmar. He receives the same dues from the cultivators as the Gārpagāri. His business is to perform the customary worship of the village deities at the prinicipal festivals, and to attend on and provide for the wants of Government officials, who visit the village. On a Sunday or Wednesday in May the Bhūmak performs the Bidrī Pūja, at which offerings subscribed for by the cultivators are made to all the village gods for the success of the crop. He offers some seed rice to the gods, placing it on a mango leaf, and then takes it all round the village, giving a few grains to each cultivator, who mixes them with his seed-grain and thereafter commences sowing. Again when the rice-plants are a foot high the Bhūmak goes to the mālguzār's field, cuts a handful of blades and distributes them to the cultivators, after which they may begin transplantation. When the cultivator has finished transplantation, he proceeds to the field, accompanied by his farm-servants, and makes five little heaps of earth, placing on each heap five bundles of rice-plants. He makes an offering to them of vermilion and boiled wheat and gram, and then throwing up the plants towards the sun, cries, 'Oh 'Sun! fill the fields so that the axles of the carts may break 'under their loads.' Then he takes his farm-servants home and gives them a good meal of wheaten and gram *chapātis* with liquor. When the crop is ripe for cutting the Bhūmak

goes to the field and cuts a sheaf, and places one or two ears on the roof of each tenant's house, and after this the harvest may begin. When the crop is on the threshing-floor he offers a cock or a goat to the field-gods so that the quantity of grain may be increased. On this occasion the cultivators invite their friends and go out and take their food in the fields. When the mahuā comes into flower the Bhūmak picks some flowers and worships them, offering a cocoanut and vermilion, and then fixes a flower on the house of each tenant. Until this has been done nobody picks mahuā.

The Bhagat.

40. Many villagers have also a Bhagat or priest of Devī, who is a Gowāri or Dhīmar. The qualification for being a Bhagat is to be possessed by the deity, in which case the gifts of divination and prophecy are held to accrue. The present Bhagat of the Bondgaon Devī is a local celebrity and makes progresses through the District followed by a train of as many as fifty persons. When he comes to a village the people assemble and he makes prophecies, telling those whose relatives are sick whether they will recover, or whether they will obtain property which has been lost or stolen, and so on. Other Bhagats make a little hut in front of Devī's shrine and place a flag on it, and from here they give oracles to those who come to consult them. The method of divination by swinging a lamp is also much practised, the answer being in the affirmative or negative according to the direction in which the lamp swings. The lamp is suspended from a stick by a sling made of human hair or of somebody's cast off sacred thread. If a man wishes to make inquiry about some other person from the Bhagat, he takes a handful of rice and carries it round him, and then takes and places it before the *Bhagat*, to represent the other person. If a man is bitten by a snake, the Bhagat comes and draws water from a well, and, muttering some charm, gives it to the patient to drink ; he will then recover and the symptoms

of snake-poisoning will appear in the Bhagat for an hour or two. People bitten by snakes are taken to the villages of Nāg kī Parsorī in Tirorā tahsīl, or Bhendāla in Bhandāra tahsīl, as it is thought that nobody can die of snake-bite within the limits of these villages. If a man is bitten by a scorpion the Bhagat comes and asks how far up his leg or arm the poison has gone. He then makes the mark of the double triangle on the spot pointed out, and puts his finger lower down, asking if the poison has gone back to there and so on. Thus he eventually brings it down to the tip of the leg or arm and expels it from the body. If a person has jaundice the Bhagat takes two needles and a pot of water and keeps holding them up before his eyes and dipping them in the water, when it is supposed that the water gradually becomes yellow and at the same time the colour leaves the sufferer's skin. Or he rubs lime on the patient's hands repeating charms, and when the lime is rubbed off it is found to have become yellow, while the skin is clear. If a man has toothache, the Bhagat takes a nail and a piece of wood and keeps on twisting the nail and pressing it into the wood, saying as he does so '*Terā dānt baith gayā*' or 'Has your tooth sat down'; the belief apparently being that when the tooth aches, it rises in the socket.

Muhammadans.

41. Muhammadans number nearly 13,000 persons, of whom about 1600 reside in Bhandāra, 900 in Paunī and 550 in Tumsar. They own 91 villages. There is nothing notable about the local Muhammadans except that they are on quite friendly terms with the Hindus, and members of both religions alike join in celebrating the Holī and Muharram.

Christians.

42. Christians numbered 319 in 1901, of whom 30 were Europeans, 3 Eurasians and 286 native Christians. In 1891 there were only 85 native Christians. Mission work in Bhandāra was inaugurated by Colonel MacDougall when Deputy Commissioner of the District, with the help of Rao Sāhib Rang Rao

and others. The United Free Church of Scotland established a station at Bhandāra in 1882. The Mission is now in charge of the Rev. D. Révie of Wardhā and supports an orphanage and dispensary and five schools for boys and girls. The resident missionaries are the Rev. T. Cockburn and Dr. Williamson. A technical workshop is attached to the orphanage. A Mission Hall has been built in the town by contributions from Scotland and two bungalows have been purchased. A station of the American Methodist Mission also exists at Gondia with three out-stations, 14 workers and a Christian community of 25. It was established about 1900. Bhandāra is in the Anglican diocese of Nāgpur and is visited by a Chaplain from Nāgpur. It is in the Roman Catholic diocese of Nāgpur.

CASTE.

General notice.

43. The principal castes of proprietors are Marāthā Brāhmans who possess 340 out of 1917 revenue villages, Ponwārs with nearly 300, Kunbīs with about 200, Lodhis with 166 and Kohlīs with 136. The Marāthā Brāhmans obtained their villages under the Bhonsla dynasty, when they were employed as revenue officials, and either assumed the management of villages or made them over to their relations. The three great cultivating castes are Ponwārs, Kunbīs and Kohlīs, the Ponwārs being traditionally skilful in growing rice, Kunbis with spring crops and Kohlīs with sugarcane. The Lodhīs are not important numerically but they hold some fine estates, notably the zamīndāri of Kāmtha. Gonds number 70,000 or about 10½ per cent. of the population and Halbās 17,000. Several of the zamīndārs belong to each of these castes, the Gonds being generally seriously involved, and the Halbās somewhat less so, though they are not usually prosperous. The Gonds suffered severely in the famines. The menial weaving and labouring caste of Mehrās is represented by 118,000 persons or nearly 18 per cent. of the population. The old titles of Deshmukh and Deshpāndia, borne by families who held revenue offices under native rule, are not found

in Bhandāra. This fact probably indicates that the immigration of the Marāthā castes into the country took place much later than in Wardhā and Nāgpur, probably as recently as the commencement of the eighteenth century. The artisan and trading castes muster strong in Bhandāra, Sonārs or goldsmiths and Lohārs or blacksmiths each numbering about 12,000. Telis and Kalārs are also well represented.

Brāhman.

44. Brāhmans number about 6000 persons. The Marāthā Brāhmans generally belong to the Deshasth subcaste, whose home is Poona. There are also a considerable number of Pardeshī or northern Brāhmans who are generally not well educated, but are strongly built physically. They are very strict in the observance of caste rules, and will not touch the plough with their own hands. They are willing however to serve as constables, water-bearers and cooks. The Marāthā Brāhman landowners are generally indebted, as they have to incur heavy expenses at marriages and other ceremonial occasions. They are permitted to cultivate with their own hands, but seldom do so. When taking food a Marāthā Brāhman puts on a *solā* or piece of cloth made of silk, wool, or hemp, which materials are considered pure. Each male individual has such a piece of cloth, to be worn only at the time of taking food. It is washed daily at home by the women of the family. The Marāthā Brāhmans are fond of tasty food and eat many kinds of chutney. A dinner for Brāhmans of good position would cost about a rupee a head. If a Brāhman is imprisoned he must make a pilgrimage to Benares and then have his thread ceremony performed a second time; and a similar procedure is adopted with those who visit England.

Ponwār.

45. Ponwārs number 63,000 persons or 10 per cent. of the population and are the fourth caste in numbers. They own nearly 300 villages. They belonged originally to Mālwā where a Ponwār dynasty ruled from the ninth to the thirteenth centuries. In the twelfth century Nāgpur was included in the

Mālwā kingdom, and the first settlement of the Ponwārs may probably be attributed to this period. They themselves say that they originally came to Nagardhan near Rāmtek, a very old town, and thence spread over the surrounding country. Some of the most influential members of the caste accompanied Chimnā Bhonsla on his Cuttack expedition and on their return were rewarded with grants of land in Lānji and other tracts to the west of the Waingangā, then largely covered with forest. Mr. Low describes the Ponwārs as follows[1] :—

'The Ponwār is to Bālāghāt what the Kunbī is to Berār 'or the Gūjar to Hoshangābād; but at the same time he is 'less entirely attached to the soil and its cultivation, and 'much more intelligent and cosmopolitan than either. One 'of the most intelligent officials in the Agricultural Depart-'ment is a Ponwār, and several members of the caste have 'made large sums as forest and railway contractors in this 'District. Ponwār *shikāris* are also not uncommon. They 'are generally averse to sedentary occupations, and though 'quite ready to avail themselves of the advantages of primary 'education, they do not as a rule care to carry their studies 'to a point that would ensure their admission to the higher 'ranks of Government service. Very few of them are to be 'found as patwāris, constables or peons. They are a hand-'some race with intelligent faces, usually fair, with high 'foreheads, and often grey eyes. They are not as a rule 'above middle height, but they are active and hardworking 'and by no means deficient in courage and animal spirits, or 'a sense of humour. They are clannish in the extreme, and 'to elucidate a criminal case in which no one but Ponwārs 'are concerned and in a Ponwār village is usually a harder 'task than the average police officer can tackle. At times 'they are apt to affect, especially in conversation with 'Government officials, a whining and unpleasant tone, es-'pecially when pleading their claim to some concession or

[1] Bālāghāt District Gazetteer, paras. 63-65.

'other; and they are by no means lacking in astuteness and 'are good hands at a bargain. But they are a pleasant, 'intelligent and plucky race, not easily cast down by mis- 'fortune and always ready to attempt new enterprises in 'almost any direction save those indicated by the Agricul- 'tural Department. Their caste customs do not differ in 'any marked way from those of the other Hindus of the 'District. They allow polygamy, and are not very strict as 'to sexual offences within the caste, though they bitterly 'resent and, if able, heavily revenge any attempt on the 'virtue of their women by an outsider. The men of the 'caste are on the other hand somewhat notorious for the 'freedom with which they enter into relations with the 'women of other castes.'

It is customary among the Ponwārs for the parents to supply clothes to a married daughter, so long as they live, and during this period a wife will not accept any clothes from her husband. At her marriage a girl is given a dowry called *khamorā* and she retains this for her own use, her husband having no control over it. The wife is a very important person among the Ponwārs and the husband will not give anything to eat or drink out of the house without her concurrence. The Ponwār women are very good cooks and appreciate variety in food. They also make pretty grass screens and mats for the house. The Ponwārs will not eat off the ground but place their dishes on little iron stands. At a funeral the Ponwārs eat fried rice and sugar at the grave, which is peculiar as being contrary to the practice of other castes.

Kunbī.

46. The Kunbīs number 79,000 or 12 per cent. of the population, being with the exception of Mehrās the most numerous caste. Mr. Lawrence derives the name from *kun* root and *bi* seed, but the more probable derivation is from *kutumba* a family. The Jhāre Kunbīs or those who belong to the *jhādi* or forest are the oldest settlers and have no doubt an admixture of Gond

blood. Among them a father goes and asks for a bride for his son, in opposition to the usual practice of the caste. The Khedūles, the next most numerous subdivision, are said to derive their name from *khedā* a village, while the Khaires take it from the *khair* or catechu tree, no doubt because they formerly prepared catechu. 'The Kunbīs,' Mr. Napier says, 'are a dull, heavy race, with little thought beyond their 'wheat and their bullocks.' The former zamīndāri family of Kāmtha, who bulk so largely in the history of the District, must however, as he points out, be excepted from this dictum. The caste eat fowls and drink liquor, but not to excess. They have a great religious veneration for cattle, and the Polā day on which these are worshipped is their chief festival. On that day all the cattle of the village pass under the *toran* or arch of mango-leaves in order of the social position of their owners and the Kunbī feels it bitterly if he does not receive the precedence to which he considers himself entitled. The Lonhāris appear to be a subcaste of Kunbis who have come from the north, probably from Betūl. In Bhandāra they have the customs of a Hindustāni caste, performing their marriages by walking round the sacred post, and speaking Hindī in their homes.

Kohlī.

47. The Kohlīs number 11,000 persons or 2 per cent. of the population and own about 140 villages. Members of this caste were the builders of the great tanks of the Sākoli tahsīl. 'The Kohlī,' Mr. Napier says, 'sacrifices all to his sugarcane, his 'one ambition and his one extravagance being to build a huge 'reservoir, which will contain water for the irrigation of his 'sugarcane through the long, hot months.' They have a remarkable faculty for selecting the best sites for tanks, and each rates the other according to the size of his tank and the strength of its embankment. Unfortunately, sugarcane, formerly a most profitable crop, has been undersold by the canal and tank irrigated product of Northern India and at present does not repay cultivation. The origin and affinities

of the Kohlīs are obscure. According to one tradition[1] they were brought by a Gond king of Chānda from Benares on his return from a visit to that place. Colonel Lucie Smith, Settlement Officer of Chānda, states that they thought their forefathers came from the south. The only fact that some of the Bhandāra Kohlīs can state about themselves at present is that their first settlement in the Central Provinces was at Lānji in Bālāghāt, whence they migrated to Bhandāra. This rather points to the theory of a northern origin, which is further supported by the similarity of the name to that of the Koirī caste of market-gardeners in Northern India; Kohiri and Kohlī are used there as variations of the caste name Koirī. On the other hand neither in their speech nor their family names can any trace of Hindustāni affinities be detected. Their dress is peculiar as they wear a short *bandī* or coat and a small head-cloth only about three feet long. Those who have *pagrīs* tie them in a similar fashion to the Gāndlis, who are oilmen from the Telugu country. 'The Kohlīs,' Mr. Napier says, 'have a splendid caste discipline 'and their quarrels are settled expeditiously by their *panchā-'yats* without recourse to Courts of Law. In their relations 'with people of other castes they are not always so amiable.' But they are generally considered to be distinctly amenable in character, and have the reputation of being very respectful to Government officers. 'Their heart is good,' as a tahsīldār of the District remarked. If a guest comes to a Kohlī, the host himself offers to wash his feet, and, if the guest be a Brāhman, insists on doing it. Like other castes engaged in spade cultivation, the Kohlīs marry two or more wives when they can afford it, a wife being a more willing labourer than a hired servant, apart from the other advantages. For the sake of economy all marriages in a village are generally celebrated on the same day once a year. The officiating Brāhman ascends the roof of a house and after beating a brass dish to warn the parties, repeats the marriage texts as

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[1] Lawrence's Bhandāra Settlement Report, page 46.

the sun goes down. At this moment the couple place garlands of flowers on each other, the bridegroom ties the *mangal-sūtram* or necklace of black beads round the bride's neck, and the marriage is completed. The bride's brother ties a thread round their marriage crowns and is given two rupees for untying it. At their weddings they make models in wood of a Chamār's *rānpi* or knife and *khurpā* or scraper, this custom perhaps indicating some connection with the Chamārs; or it may have arisen simply on account of the prominent part played by the *mot* or leather bag in the irrigation of sugarcane. The ordinary price for a bride is Rs. 30, but double that sum is paid for a widow of full age. A widow is married to a sword representing her second husband, who never attends in person. On account perhaps of the utility of their wives, and the social temptations which beset them from being continually abroad at work, they are lenient to conjugal offences, and a woman going wrong with an outsider will be taken back by her husband, and only a trifling punishment imposed by the caste. Divorce is very seldom resorted to and involves severe penalties to both parties. The Kohlīs eat flesh, but abstain from liquor.

Gowāri.

48. The grazier caste numbers 37,000 or 6 per cent. of the population. The bulk of these are returned as Gowāris, who are a low branch of the Ahīrs, closely connected with the forest tribes. One of their subdivisions is called Gond-Gowāri and these are no doubt simply Gond herdsmen. The Gowāris themselves say that the Gond-Gowāris are the descendants of one of two brothers who accidentally ate the flesh of a cow. The Gowāris take food from proper Gaolīs, but the latter will not accept it at their hands. They do not employ Brāhmans at their weddings, an elder of the caste officiating. They permit widow-marriages, and if the husband is a bachelor he is wedded to an *akrā* or swallow-wort plant or a copper ring before espousing the widow. This is his real marriage, as a union with a

widow is not viewed in that light. When a death occurs, the family of the deceased may not resume social intercourse, until the elders of the caste have taken its principal member to the bazar, where they purchase rice, vegetables and other food and returning, feed him at his house. If he is a cultivator he must also be taken to his field where he is, as it were, inducted into it by the caste committee. If the cow of a Gowārī dies with a rope round its neck, a great sin is held to have been committed, and the offender must shave his moustaches and give a substantial meal to the caste. The caste eat fowls and drink liquor. Both men and women tattoo their bodies, the men usually having a dot between the eyebrows, and the women two lines of dots with a longer one below them. The women wear metal bracelets on the right arm and glass bangles on the left one, and, in contradistinction to other Marāthā castes, who use red powder, have spangles on the forehead. The Gowāris spend much of their time in the forests with their cattle and lead the simple life. A saying about them is 'The Gond and Gowāri drink only rice-water from leaf cups 'and eat only boiled juāri off leaf-plates.' Another grazier caste who are found in small numbers are the Golars or Telugu graziers. They are a migratory race and were formerly addicted to dacoity and cattle-theft. The Golars are closely connected with the Holiās, or Telugu leather workers, and have the same family or section-names. When a Golar dies a plate of cooked rice is laid on his body and then carried to the burning-ghāt. The Holiās belonging to the same section go with it, and before arrival the plate of rice is laid on the ground and the Holiās eat it.

Marār.

49. The Mālis or Marārs as they are called in Bhandāra number 30,000 or 4 per cent. of the population. They grow vegetables and flowers. The Marārs allow the custom of *lamjhanā* or serving for a bride, which is purely Dravidian and show their connection with the forest tribes. The morality of the

caste is somewhat low and if a woman goes wrong, they make an effort to conceal the fact and sometimes try to cause an abortion. If these efforts are unsuccessful a feast must be given to the caste and a lock of the woman's hair is cut off by way of punishment. A young hardworking wife is never divorced however bad her character may be, but an old woman is sometimes abandoned for very little cause. The Marār women generally have a large glass spangle as an ornament for the forehead. The caste are as a rule poor. They are quiet and industrious, but their habit of polygamy gives rise to family quarrels and also leads to excessive subdivision of their holdings.

Teli and Gāndli.

50. Telis number 42,000 or 6 per cent. of the population and own about 45 villages. Most of them have abandoned their traditional occupation of pressing oil and have taken to agriculture and petty trading. The chief subdivisions of the caste are the Do-baile or those who yoke two bullocks to the oil-mill, the Ek-baile or those who use only one bullock, and the Andele or growers of the castor-oil plant; but these are now ordinary cultivators. The Telis are chiefly concentrated in the Paunī pargana. They consult a Mahār, who is called Mohturyā, to fix the date of their marriages. The Gāndlis were originally the Telugu caste of oilmen, but they have now abandoned this profession and taken to agriculture, thereby obtaining a rise in status. They belong to the sect of Lingāyats ; and wear the *lingam* or phallic sign of Siva in a little silver casket round the neck or waist. The *lingam* is presented to them by a Brāhman who comes from Madras at intervals and gives them a *rudrāksha* bead, which serves for the emblem of Mahādeo. They employ the Jangams, or priests of the Lingāyats, but some of them now prefer to obtain the services of Marāthā Brāhmans, probably considering it more respectable. They arrange their marriages in the Chānda District, where the caste is more numerous; those of Bhandāra live principally round Adyāl.

51. Dhīmars number 32,000 or 5 per cent. of the population. They are generally poor and no Dhīmar owns a village. Besides their callings of fishing and acting as boatmen, they follow various other avocations such as growing *singhāra* or water-nut, for which the Bhandāra tanks afford a large scope; cultivating tasar silk cocoons on *sāj* trees; selling fried rice and gram; breeding pigs for sacrifice; and acting as household servants. At a Dhīmar marriage a net is given to the bridegroom and *sidorī* or cooked food tied in a piece of cloth to the bride, and they walk out together as if going to a river to fish, but the bride's brother comes up and stops them. A Dhīmar will not touch or wear a shoe sewn with thread, because his net is made of thread, and he thinks that the sacred article is debased by being sewn into leather. It is a great degradation to a Dhīmar to be struck with a shoe. The Injhwārs are another boating caste. The name is simply a corruption of Binjhwār and they are an offshoot of this, the comparatively civilised section of the Baigā tribe, formed into a caste through the adoption of their special calling. The women of one of their subcastes serve as midwives. They are connected with the Gowāris and sometimes call themselves Dūdh-Gowāris. This is not surprising as the Gowāris themselves were probably originally Gonds.

Dhīmar.

52. The Koshtīs number 18,000 or 3 per cent. of the population and own 10 villages. They occupy a higher position than the other weaver castes, as they weave the finer kinds of cloth, which the highest castes wear, and generally live in towns. The Nāgpur Koshtīs are on occasion distinctly turbulent. One subdivision, the Sālewar Koshtis, who are of Telugu origin, wear the sacred thread. The bulk of the caste eat flesh and fowls and drink liquor, but some of them abstain. Women are very useful to them in their weaving work and hence a regular traffic in wives takes place in some instances. A case occurred in Bhandāra where a father purchased a

Koshtī.

wife for his son for Rs. 75, and after marrying her to him, sold her to a Nāgpur Koshtī for Rs. 108. In another case a man mortgaged his wife in lieu of interest for a debt, and after remaining with the creditor for a year and a half she was redeemed on payment of the principal. They are not strict in regard to the morals of their women and will tolerate a liaison with a man of another caste. The Koshtīs have their family god installed in their weaving-loom, and they must not touch it with the foot as they think that it would break on account of the insult to the god.

Gond.

53. Gonds number 70,000 or 11 per cent. of the population and are the third caste in point of numbers. They hold eight zamīndāri estates but no toher villages. The local subdivisions are the Rāj-Gonds, Dhur-Gonds and Pardhāns. The latter are employed as bards and musicians, especially in the zamīndāri families, but the bulk of them are ordinary labourers. The Pardhāns are considered as inferior to the Gonds and will take food from their hands, though the Gonds will not accept it from them. The tribe celebrate their marriages in the open outside the village, and sometimes the couple stand on a heap of refuse. The couple are carried on the shoulders of their relatives five times round the officiating priest who sits in the middle. Two spears are tied together to make an arch, and water is poured over it while the couple stand beneath; they then run out and the bridegroom hits the bride a blow on the back which should be given if possible before she runs from under the spears. The bridegroom must force an iron ring on to the bride's finger, though she clenches her fist and tries to prevent him. The blood of a chicken is sprinkled over the hands of the pair, and sometimes a chicken is slaughtered for each god worshipped by the bridegroom's sept. When a Gond girl wishes to show her preference for a man she takes a pot of water mixed with turmeric and throws it over him in the presence of three or four witnesses, and after this their marriage is celebrated. The

Gonds are not considered as impure, though they eat pork and beef, and the Ponwārs, Gowāris and others will take water from them. The Pardhāns are however held to be impure and are not touched. The Gonds are readily employed as farm-servants as they are honest and laborious. At the Diwāli the Gonds and other castes do the *dhandhār* or stick dance, in which every man dances separately hitting two sticks together. It is said that the Gonds dance less than they used to and that the famines have taken a good deal of the cheerfulness out of their lives. This statement, however, was made in 1903 and the Gonds must by now have become quite prosperous again.

Halbā.

54. The Halbās number 17,000 persons or 3 per cent. of the population. The zamīndāri of Chīchgarh belongs to the caste and five other small zamīndāris. The Halbās seem to be a Dravidian tribe of labourers and the name may be derived from *hal* a plough. Some, however, maintain that it comes from the Canarese *Halbār* 'The old ones or ancients,' and that they came from the south with the Rājā of Wārangal, who fled to Bastar on being defeated by the Muhammadans. In Bhandāra the leading families say they came from the north and migrated to Bhandāra from the Makrai State. In their marriage ceremony these families place crowns of *palās* leaves on the couple, which is a practice of the northern castes. In other respects, however, they have adopted Marāthā customs and celebrate the marriage by throwing coloured rice over the pair. Their principal god is Dulhā Deo whom they call Mothā Deo or the great god, but they also revere Mahādeo and Hanumān. They have two divisions, the Barī or great and the Lahān or small. The latter are the offspring of irregular unions. The caste drink liquor and eat fowls and pork, but not beef. Many of them are employed in the preparation and sale of *pohā*, that is rice which is first boiled to take off the husks and then fried.

SOCIAL LIFE AND CUSTOMS.

55. The note comprised in this and the next paragraph on a Bhandāra village and its population has been contributed by Mr. R. H. MacNair, Assistant Commissioner:—

A Bhandāra village

The typical Bhandāra village is situated on the highest ground available. If possible, the site is chosen with a view to constructing a tank hard by, to be used for irrigation, for washing and for watering cattle. The embankment of the tank is planted with mangoes, and frequently there is also a grove of mangoes close to the village, in the shade of which travellers may rest. Within the village site, tamarinds are usually found; and there are one or two *bargat* or pīpal trees, underneath which will be placed a rude Mahādeo, with or without a protective roof. The lanes in the village are flanked by custard-apple trees and gourds creep over the less pretentious houses. The mālguzār and tenants have large yards, walled in, which contain a number of buildings and, if possible, a well; the buildings are occasionally of brick but commonly of clay and are tiled. The larger yards are bare and clean. Poor tenants utilise any spare space for Indian corn or juār, and this, joined to the common indifference about clean roads, does much to give the village an untidy appearance. Outside the village site the most notable object is the tank. On this the prosperity of the village depends, and a glance at its size and condition enables one to guess the state of the inhabitants. A large well-situated tank in good repair means that the bulk of the tenants are substantial men, holding valuable rights in the land and that the proprietary body are prepared to spend money on the village and can work in unison; but there is no site for such a tank in the majority of villages, while tanks in good repair are not the rule. The proprietary body of the village may be of many kinds. A large percentage of villages are managed entirely by the agent of a non-resident trader or zamīndār; while on the other hand equally bad results accrue when the body is

numerous, poor and quarrelsome. It is only when there is a strong resident headman that there is much chance of united action such as is necessary for the repair of the tank. The land immediately beneath the tank will be the *sīr* or home farm of the proprietor, watered by the lowest outlet; on both sides of this lies the land of the better class tenants which can be irrigated only from outlets on a higher level at the sides of the embankment. The land far from the tank and the unirrigated land in most cases forms the bulk of the tenants' holdings. All the rice land is embanked and forms a regular pattern, diversified in some cases by mahuā trees planted here and there. Smaller tanks, which, as a rule, will not contain water throughout the year, may be found in the village area; in their beds wheat or gram is regularly sown, after the water has been carried on to the rice-fields below. Each tenant will have a field unsuited for rice, of about equal area to his rice field; here he sows juār, kodon or til with possibly wheat or gram in rotation. The margin of the tank is cultivated by Dhīmars, often by hand labour.

The village forest contains few valuable trees, but it is often extensive. Mahuā is the most valuable product, but *ber*, *achār*, *jāmun* and other fruit trees may be plentiful. *Palās* trees are also now much valued for the cultivation of the lac insect. The fields of the tenants often contain mahuā or mango trees. The tank supplies water in plenty, and fodder is fairly abundant except when the rice crop has failed. The pasture ground, however, is bare, and cattle, especially cows and milch buffaloes, subsist through the hot weather with difficulty.

The villagers.

56. The proprietors of the village vary so much in every respect that no general description is possible The well-to-do tenants are for the most part, Ponwārs, Kunbis or Lodhīs. They derive their income from the fields, and, occasionally, from hiring out their carts; they often employ labourers for field embankments and the more arduous tasks. Gonds and Mahārs have

usually inferior holdings. The Gond makes a very efficient coolie; while the Mahār adds to his income by weaving. In almost every village there is a kotwār, blacksmith, waterman and barber; these menials serve the tenants, except as regards the waterman and barber, persons of impure caste, and receive a grain contribution. The Gārpagāri who keeps off hail, and the Bhūmak who wards off diseases, may serve several villages. A species of gallows, under which the road approaching the village runs, is the work of the latter and protects the village from small-pox; no specific for plague has yet been discovered. The larger villages contain carpenters and sometimes leather-workers; but the latter as a rule do not receive a yearly wage.

The women mix freely in the village life, and appear more independent than in the north. There may be a school in the village, but it will not be a popular institution; and attendance would be very small but for the moral suasion applied by the tahsīldār.

The Bhandāra villager does not care for hard work. In the rains the tenants and labourers often work for days at a stretch, but once the rice is cut and threshed, there is time for a little relaxation.

A very large proportion of the tenants attend one of the religious fairs in the District, about the beginning of April. Gaimukh is the most popular, while Partābgarh is the rendezvous of Mahārs. Holī and Muharram are kept by Hindu and Muhammadan alike, and weddings form another break. After this they leisurely put up earthwork until it is time to manure their fields; and then sowing time comes round again.

Houses.

57. In Tirorā tahsīl houses are usually tiled, in Bhandāra both tiled and thatched, and in Sākoli usually thatched. Large proprietors and a few tenants have *dhābedār* or terraced houses. Subordinate Government officials and guests are lodged in the *parchhī* or enclosed room beside the gateway of the māl-

guzār's house. Private latrines do not exist in villages and the country people greatly dislike them. The cattle are tied in a shed near the main dwelling or in the veranda behind the house, as they must be always under the owner's eye. Grain is kept in round bamboo receptacles called *dholās* supported on wooden posts with thatched covers. Those for seed-grain are often outside the house and are only opened when sowing-time comes, while those for food are kept inside the house, and the requisite amount of grain is allowed to run out daily from a hole in the side. Among the most essential articles of furniture are a roller and slab of stone for pounding spices, and a stone mortar and pestle; these articles are worshipped by several castes at marriages. All households also have the *bothrīs* or mattresses made of old clothes and rags sewn together. If struck with one of these by a Hindu, a Māng is temporarily put out of caste. The ordinary tenant sleeps on straw and covers himself with one of these mattresses.

Dress.

58. There is little to remark on in the dress of the people. Men as a rule wear white clothes, sometimes with a red *pagrī*. The cultivators still use hand-woven loin-cloths, especially those of double thread, which are stronger. On the head they have a small piece of cloth called a *romāl*. Under the head-cloth men often wear little cotton caps. The *bandī* or short coat with strings is the usual covering of the body. Dhīmars and Gonds often go naked above the waist, and also poor cultivators and labourers of other castes. Dhīmars are generally noticeable for their paucity of clothing. A farm-servant will buy one small cloth, costing 6 annas, yearly. His last year's one will be kept for a change, and that of the year before last will be worn on the head. A farm-servant formerly always bought a cloth when he was given a rupee at a time because he knew that this would be his only chance of doing so. Women still wear one long cloth secured round the waist and folded over the shoulders, which is called *sāri*

when it has silk and *lugrā* when it has cotton borders. This cloth is 24 feet long and 3 to 4½ feet wide, but poor women have them only 15 feet long. Many wear black or red cloths or black mixed with white or red. Ponwār, Dhīmar and Kohlī women often wear white cloths, locally called *korwān*. Immigrants from the north, as the Umre Kalārs, Bhaore Mānas, Kirārs and others, wear the *angia* or breast-cloth tied behind, while those of the south have the *cholī* which ties in front. Mahālodhī women wear no *cholī* and have nothing over their breasts underneath the *sāri*. These are the Lodhīs who have come from Chhattīsgarh. Both men and women buy clothes ready-made in the weekly bazars to which they are taken for sale. In the cold weather the *kantopre* or cap with flaps coming down over the ears and often stuffed with cotton is worn. *Wahnās* or sandals are a good deal worn both by men and by women who work in the fields. Other women do not usually wear shoes, though in towns they have begun to adopt the practice. When a man is on a journey he will often take off his shoes after he has gone a mile or so and carry them. Dhīmars and Halbās may not wear ordinary shoes, and several of the lower castes may not sell a pair of shoes if they do not fit, but must give them away. Men usually have their heads shaved clean except the *chotī* or scalp-lock. This they clean with earth and then oil and comb it. Hair is considered a burden and there is a saying to the effect that the sooner it is got rid of the better. The village barber does not shave Mehrās and they get themselves shaved by their caste barber on market-days, where a crowd of them may be seen undergoing the operation successively. A child's hair is cut for the first time in the first or third year of its age. It is unlucky to cut it in an even year. Many people go to a sacred river to cut a child's hair for the first time, and the temple of Narsingh on the island in the Waingangā opposite the railway bridge is a favourite place of resort. Most people bathe in hot water for the greater part of the year except in the summer. Cultivators

bathe on return from their day's work, and women after cooking.

Food and ceremonial observances.

59. Cultivators eat *ambil*, a gruel of boiled juāri and water at about ten and two o'clock. Tamarind vinegar is mixed with this to add to its relish, and it is eaten with salt, onions and chillies. For the evening meal they have *bhākar* or thick *chapātis* of juār, with vegetables and pulse, or *besan*, gram flour cooked in water with salt, chillies and onions. Mālguzārs have *chapātis* of juār and wheat or boiled rice with pulse and vegetables. The well-to do mix *ghī* with their food and the poorer classes tillī or mahuā oil. Kohlīs and Koshtīs are very fond of crabs. The people generally smoke home-grown tobacco and the *bīris* or cigarettes made in Tirorā are sent outside the District. Most men smoke and a good many chew tobacco and a few take snuff. Women do not smoke but some of them chew tobacco. The lower castes drink less liquor now that it has become more expensive. Chamārs, who were formerly hard drinkers, have, it is said, begun to abstain. With the exception of Brāhmans, Rājputs and Baniās, all castes eat their food in the fields. If a man is eating food and he is touched by a person of any caste other than one from which he is allowed to accept food, the meal is polluted and must be thrown away. The Mahārs and Gonds are not permitted to draw water from the village well. Up till recently Mahār boys were not allowed to sit in school with Hindu boys and were taught in the veranda or in separate schools, but now they sit in the same class though a little apart. A similar practice is followed by travellers in railway trains. A railway carriage is held to be analogous to a bazar, at which infection is not conveyed by accidental contact. Some Brāhmans will not eat at all on a railway journey. They may get out of the train and drink water but must not drink it inside the carriage. When a Brāhman has gone on a railway journey he must wash his body and change all his clothes before he eats. Some Brāhmans when

they get medicine from a dispensary take it home and water it before drinking it, because the dispensary building is cleaned by a sweeper. A Brāhman may go into the house of any except the impure castes.

Marriage.

60. The age of marriage is earlier in the Marāthā Districts than in any other part of the Province. The Ponwārs, especially, marry their daughters at a very early age, but more from motives of economy than religion. For a girl of full age a high price has to be paid by the bridegroom. The Hindus perform marriages for eight months in the year from the 11th day of the dark fortnight of Kārtik to the 11th of Asārh, omitting the four months of the rains. Brāhmans do not marry in the months of Chaitra and Pūs in addition to the other four. The Golars celebrate their marriages both at the bride's house and the bridegroom's. The bridegroom rides on a horse and on arrival at the marriage-shed is presented by his future father-in-law with a cup of milk. The bride and bridegroom sit on a platform together and each gets up and sits down nine times, the one who accomplishes this first being considered to have won. The bridegroom then takes the bride's little finger in his hand and they walk nine times round the platform. He afterwards falls at the girl's feet, and standing up, carries her inside the house, where they eat together out of one dish. After three days the party proceeds to the bridegroom's house where the same ceremonies are gone through. Here the family barbers of the bride and bridegroom take the couple up in their arms and dance holding them, and all the party dance too. Among the Gāndlis the wedding procession goes from the bride's to the bridegroom's house. The Telis, Lohārs, Dhīmars, Injhwārs, Gowāris and Marāthā Kalārs consult a Dhed or Mahār to fix the date of their weddings, this man being called the Mohturyā. He is always illiterate. This is probably a sort of deference paid to the Mahārs as the earliest inhabitants of the country, of which instances occur elsewhere. A custom

formerly prevailed among the Sonārs, that the bride's foot having been smeared with red powder she should plant it on the bridegroom's back, by way of showing her superiority to him; but this is now falling into disuse. At a Labhāna or Banjārā marriage the girl is clad only in a light skirt and breast-cloth and rubbed all over with oil. The Joshi or village priest who officiates at the wedding is then told to run after her and catch her, while she eludes him, and the bride's party pelt him with rice, turmeric and areca-nuts. When he finally catches the girl and brings her to the marriage-shed, the boy's party subscribe, dropping coins into a plate which he holds, and he often receives a considerable sum. The Ponwārs pay large sums up to a thousand rupees for a young and pretty widow. The Kunbīs also pay for widows but the prices are not so high. Among the Gonds, Telis, Gowāris, Chamārs, Kohlīs, Lodhīs and Marārs a deceased husband's younger brother marries his wife, and this practice also prevails among the Muhammadans of Bhandāra. Some Muhammadan families of the higher classes do not permit widows to marry. In the castes which allow widow-marriages, women can also be kept and the Ponwārs and Kunbīs sometimes keep Gond and Gowāri girls; but the practice is not common, and a man who indulges in it is looked down on. Such girls can subsequently be readmitted into their caste and be married in it.

Child-birth and magical beliefs.

61. When a woman is in her menstrual period, she stays apart and may not cook for herself nor touch anybody nor sleep on a bed made of cotton thread. The Gonds have a separate house outside the village to which women have to retire at this time. When a woman is with child for the first time her women friends come and give her green clothes and bangles; they then put her into a swing and sing songs. While she is pregnant she is made to work in the house so as not to be inactive. If the birth is delayed they put a few grains of gram into the woman's hand and then

some one takes and feeds them to a mare, as it is thought that the woman's pregnancy has been prolonged by her having walked behind the tethering-ropes of a mare, which is twelve months in foal. Or she is given water to drink in which a Sulaimāni bead or a rupee of Akbar's time has been washed. A pregnant woman must not look on a dead body or her child may be still-born and she must not see an eclipse or the child may be born maimed. Women of the Māng, Mahār, Gond and Dhīmar castes act as midwives. Sometimes when delivery is delayed they take a folded flower and place it in a pot of water and believe that as its petals unfold so the womb will be opened and the child born, or they seat her on a wooden bench and pour oil on her head, her forehead being afterwards rubbed with it, in the belief that as the oil falls so the child will be born. If a child is a long time before learning to speak, they give it leaves of the pīpal tree to eat, because the leaves of this tree make a noise by rustling in the wind; or a root which is very light in weight, because they think that the tongue is heavy and the quality of lightness will thus be communicated to it. A child is given grain to eat for the first time six months after birth. The first teeth of a child are thrown on to the roof of the house, because the rats, who have especially good and sharp teeth, live there, and it is hoped that the child's second teeth may grow like theirs. Or they are placed under a water-pot in the hope that the child's second teeth may grow as fast as the grass does under water-pots. If a child is lean some people take it to a place where asses have lain down and rolled in ashes; they roll the child in the ashes similarly and believe that it will get fat like the asses are. Or they may lay the child in a pig-sty with the same idea. People who want to injure a child get hold of its coat and lay it out in the sun to dry, in the belief that the child's body will dry up in a similar manner.

LEADING FAMILIES.

The zamīndāris.

62. The District contains 33 zamīndāri estates, including subordinate zamīndāris. A few of the zamīndārs derived their titles from grants of the Chānda or Mandlā kings, but the bulk of them date from the time of the Bhonslas, when the country east of the Waingangā, at that time generally covered with forest, was allotted to the ancestors of the present zamīndārs on condition that they should clear the forest and bring the land under cultivation. The Nāgpur Government was accustomed to exact a large proportion of the revenue, and in several cases the status of zamīndār was either not granted at all, or only a few years before the District lapsed to the British. It was accordingly decided by Sir R. Temple that the full zamīndāri status should not be conferred on the holders of the Waingangā estates; and the principal difference between the zamīndārs and ordinary mālguzārs is that their revenue, known as *takolī*, is assessed in a lump sum on the whole estate and at a somewhat lower proportion than in the case of *khālsa* territory. Several of the zamīndāris are quite unimportant, containing less than ten villages. The largest is Kāmtha, containing 128 villages and next to this come Chīchgarh, Amgaon, Bijlī, Deorī-Kishorī, Warad and Pālkhedā. Seven of the zamīndārs are Rāj-Gonds, six Halbās, four Lodhīs, three Ponwārs, three Mānas, and the remainder belong to different castes. A separate notice of each zamīndāri is contained in the Gazetteer Appendix. The zamīndāris contain altogether 567 villages or 31 per cent. of the total number in the District.

Brāhman families.

63. Except for the zamīndāris the most important families are of the Brāhman caste, and among these the family of the late Rao Bahādur Yādava Rao, who died in 1897, stands first. He was a Kanaujia Brāhman of Cawnpore and acquired a large fortune by moneylending, and the estate now consists of 57 villages, besides having an income of about Rs. 60,000 a year from

its loan transactions in cash and grain. Yādava Rao evinced considerable public spirit; he subscribed Rs. 25,000 to the Bhandāra water-works, and constructed various wells, tanks and schools. He earned the title of Rao Bahādur and was also an Honorary Magistrate and Honorary Extra Assistant Commissioner. The present owner of the estate, Ganpat Rao Yādava Rao Pānde, is a boy of about 15 years of age and is at school. The estate was taken under the Court of Wards in 1898 but was relinquished in 1901 owing to the difficulty of managing a large moneylending business and the obstructive attitude of the widows. A retired pleader of some standing, Rao Sāhib Rang Rao, has been appointed guardian of the ward and manager of the estate. Another important family is that of Asāram Sao of Sihorā, a Mārwāri Brāhman. His ancestors came from Jaisalmer and were storekeepers and treasurers to the Bhonslas, amassing great wealth. But the family has subsequently fallen in position and now owns only nine villages. The Būti family of Nāgpur, who are Charak Brāhmans, own about 30 villages in the District. The zamīndārs of Nansarī and Gond-Umrī are Brāhmans.

Other families.

64. The principal Rājput families are the zamīndārs of Dongarlī, Mahāgaon, Palāsgaon and Kanhalgaon. Thākur Mahārāj Singh of Banāthar owns seven villages and is fairly well to do. The zamīndāris of Phukimetā, Tirkhedī and Mālpurī are owned by Ponwār families, and those of Kāmtha, Bijlī, Warad and Deorī by Lodhī families. The zamīndārs of Amgaon and Pālkhedā are Kunbīs, and another important proprietor of this caste is the mālguzār of Saolī-Dongargaon, who owns 21 villages. This estate was formerly a zamīndāri belonging to a Gond family, but when the present owners purchased it the zamīndāri status was abolished. The zamīndārs of Umrī, Khairī and Turmāpurī are Mānas by caste. A respectable Marāthā family is that of Venkat Rao of Jām. His ancestors came from Berār and his grandfather was Dīwān to the Rānī Bakā Bai widow of Raghujī III of Nāgpur. The etsate was

under the Court of Wards from 1864 till 1883, and formerly consisted of 15 villages, of which eight have been sold for debt and seven remain. Venkat Rao lives in Nāgpur. The Bhonsla Rājās Raghujī Rao and Lakhsman Rao own about 25 villages in the District. The Hon'ble Mr. G. M. Chitnavīs of Nāgpur, who is a Parbhu, has an estate of 60 villages. A Kāyasth moneylender has obtained half the zamīndāri of Darekasā on a foreclosure decree. The zamīndāris of Jāmbhli, Arjunī, Bhāgi, Dallī, Purāda, Sālekasā and Darekasā belong to Rāj-Gond proprietors. Anand Shāh Bāpu of Rāwanwādi formerly held his estate on a quit rent, but at Mr. Napier's settlement, it was settled on a mālguzāri tenure. It consists of ten villages and was granted by the Deogarh Rājā Bakht Buland. The family is now heavily indebted and its members quarrel among themselves. The zamīndār of Gangājhari is a Pardhān, the Pardhāns being an inferior class of Gonds. Six zamīndāris, Chichgarh, Dāwa, Khajrī, Palāsgaon, Chikhlī and Chīchewāra are owned by families of the Halbā caste, in which some zamīndārs of the adjoining Chānda District are also included. These are the only two Districts in which Halbās are landed proprietors. The Halbās are household servants of the Rājā of Kānker. The zamīndār of Rajolī is a Muhammadan.

CHAPTER IV.

AGRICULTURE.

(By E. Danks.)

SOILS.

Descriptions of soil.

65. The principal kinds of soil in the District are as follows:—

Kāli and kanhār.—The distinction between these soils is not very great, and the area classed as *kāli* is nominal; it is usually *kanhār* which has been swamped in water owing to its situation. It thus loses all trace of lime,[1] and at the same time is further enriched by rotting vegetable matter. It often takes a distinctly blue-black tint as opposed to the brown-black of *kanhār*. *Kanhār* is a very rich alluvial soil, probably of trap origin. It crumbles readily, and is easy to work.

Morand I differs from *kanhār* by the presence of *chunkarī*, or limestone nodules.

Morand II is of two kinds, of approximately equal value. They are both formed of black soil, the one including, however, a considerable amount of *chunkarī*, and the other a good deal of sand washed down from the sandstone hills.

Khardī is the name used for all soils dark in colour, which contain so great an admixture of *chunkarī*, or of stones, or are so deficient in depth, as to be of less value than *morand* II.

Sihār is a reddish-yellow soil formed mainly of the detritus of the crystalline rock. It cracks very little in the hot weather.

Bardī is the name given to very poor, gritty *sihār* or to the detritus of laterite rock.

[1] The absence of lime in *kāli* soil is now thought to be due to its basaltic origin and the absence of any limestone grit at the time of its formation. (S. Clouston, Deputy Director of Agriculture.)

Kachhār, *marhāni* and *retāri* are names given to three sorts of soil found by river banks. They are all alluvial and differ in value according to the deposit brought down. *Kachhār* is blackish in colour, and contains very little sand. *Marhāni* is red and is much more sandy than *kachhār*; but still excellently suited, because so constantly renewed, for garden crops. *Retāri* is poor stuff, almost all sand, and fit only for growing *kulthā*.

Rīth is not really a distinct soil class but rather a slate-coloured condition at which any soil may arrive when close to a village. Its value varies according to the original character of the soil.

The most important soils are *morand* I and II, and *sihār*, which between them account for 824,000 cultivated acres out of 980,000.

Distinctions of position.

66. In assessing the land a number of further distinctions have to be made as follows:—

(*a*) Wheat land is either embanked or unembanked and rice and garden land are either irrigated or unirrigated.

(*b*) The position of the land, whether sloping, level, lying in a hollow or cut up by water-courses is distinguished.

(*c*) Irrigated rice land is subdivided according to the permanence of the irrigation.

(*d*) Garden land is subdivided according to the character of the irrigation and to its position near to or at a distance from a village.

(*e*) Any land may be raised in value by being near a village or lowered by being subject to the depredations of wild beasts.

It is unnecessary to cumber the pages of this book with the detailed subdivisions and their vernacular names. The curious will find the matter treated in detail in Mr. Napier's Settlement Report, paras. 25 to 33.

STATISTICS OF CULTIVATION.

Principal statistics.

67. The area of the District is 3966 square miles as given by professional survey. The area as collected from the village papers is 20 square miles less. Of this total, 533 square miles are forest, 399 square miles are not available for cultivation, 1324 square miles are culturable waste, and 1697 square miles are occupied for cultivation, including new and old fallow. There is then considerable scope for the extension of cultivation. The effect of the lean years which began in 1894 is clearly shown in the figures of the cropped area and fallows. The highest point the cropped area has yet reached was 898,000 acres in 1893-94. From this figure it decreased slowly but steadily to 797,000 acres in 1897-98; there was a partial recovery in the next year and then it touched its lowest point in 1899-00 at 661,000. In the next two years it slowly recovered, but there was a set back in 1902-03, a year of complete failure of crops. But the last three years have been years of steady recovery and the area now (1905-06) stands at 846,000 acres.

New fallow.

68. In the same way the new fallow which only stood at 70,000 acres in 1893-94 amounted to nearly treble this area in 1897-98 (197,000), fell slightly in the next year, and increased in 1899-00 to the appalling figure of 321,000 acres. It was very high for the next three years and again fell to 118,000 acres in 1903-04. The area has decreased steadily in the subsequent two years and is now less than it has been for ten years. There are very few crops which require resting fallows in this District. Rice can be cropped year after year from the same land so long as it is given water, and the amount of fallow that is agriculturally necessary is probably not more than 50,000 acres.

Double-cropping.

69. When two crops are taken off the same land, the first of them is nearly always rice. But the double-cropped area may be divided

into two parts. In the first, rice is the substantive crop and the after crops are sown in a casual way without any preparation of the fields, thus giving a small outturn. This is the method practised over the greater part of the District. In the other kind of double-cropping, the second crop, generally wheat or gram, is the important one; the rice is sown broadcast, and a light variety which is reaped early is grown, so as to allow the fields to be prepared for the second crop. The double-cropped area depends chiefly on the character of the monsoon. When the monsoon is heavy, and especially if the September rain is copious, the area sown is large. In a year of light rainfall it is small. Consequently it fluctuates very much from year to year. In the famine year of 1899-00 it was only 7000 acres, and in 1902-03, also a year of very small rainfall, it was 52,000 acres. In 1905-06 on the other hand, when a scanty early monsoon was followed by heavy September rain, it reached 203,000 acres or nearly a quarter of the whole cropped area. This was an increase of 42,000 on the year before. The normal area double-cropped in a good year should be 200,000 acres or rather more. As an illustration of the way the area fluctuates, the following figures are interesting :—

1899-1900	...	...	7,325	acres.
1900-1901	...	...	131,323	"
1901-1902	...	...	118,105	"
1902-1903	...	...	52,494	"
1903-1904	...	...	194,719	"

Statistics of crops.

70. In 1905-06 autumn crops covered 611,000 acres or 58 per cent. and spring crops 438,000 acres or 42 per cent. of the gross cropped area. Since 1893-94 the relative strength of the autumn crops has slightly increased. In 1905-06, rice occupied 433,000 acres or 41 per cent. of the gross cropped area, wheat 95,000 acres or 9 per cent., juār 88,000 acres or 8 per cent., kodon and kutkī 30,000 acres or 3 per cent., tiurā 110,000 acres or 10½ per cent., linseed 69,000 acres or 6½ per cent.,

urad and mūng 61,000 acres or 6 per cent., and gram 45,000 acres or 4 per cent. The area under rice showed a decline of 64,000 acres since 1893-94, and that under wheat of 34,000 acres. Juār has gained considerably in popularity, and the area under linseed has somewhat declined while that of til has slightly increased. Linseed, tiurā, *lākhori*, gram and urad are usually sown as second crops.

CROPS.

Rice—Varieties.

71. By far the most important crop in the District is rice (*Oryza sativa*). The cultivators recognise about 70 different varieties of rice, and will give slight differences in the method of cultivating each. Curious derivations are sometimes given for the names of different kinds. For instance *pisso* rice is said to be so called because the grain closely resembles the insect of that name. *Samudarsok* is variously explained as requiring much water for cultivation, requiring much water to boil it, and having been imported from the seaside. The best variety grown is *chinnūr* and the village of Raipur in Kāmtha zamīndāri is said to be well known for its *chinnūr* rice. This variety sells at a substantially higher rate than the others. For practical purposes rice may be classed as light and heavy. The light kinds require less water, and ripen earlier; the heavy ones require much water and ripen late.

Transplanted rice.

72. There are two principal methods of cultivating rice, by transplantation, and by sowing broadcast. Transplanting rice (*rohnā* or *parhā*) is perhaps the most elaborate method of cultivation in the Province. As its name implies the seed is sown in one place and the seedlings after they have grown a little are transplanted to another. The place in which the seed is sown is known as the "nursery" (*khār*). It is prepared for sowing by being ploughed twice at least, once with the *nāgar* or deep plough and once with the *bakhar* or paring plough. It is also heavily manured. The seed is sown broadcast but

very thick on the ground. The amount, of course, varies, but 5 *kuros* (100 lbs.) to a twentieth part of an acre is about an average. This requires two cartloads (5 maunds) of manure. The seed may be sown in dry earth or after the rains have begun, but the latter is much the more usual method, as the seeds do not germinate until there has been a fair amount of rain. The seedlings should remain in the nursery for about 30 to 40 days, but they cannot be transplanted until conditions are suitable, and if the transplantation is much delayed the outturn of the crop suffers. The next operation is transplantation. The rice is transplanted into small fields (*bandhīs*), with embankments, usually low. It is of great importance that the surface of the embanked fields should be level, so that a low embankment will keep an equal depth of water all over the field. On sloping ground the surface of each field is levelled by digging out earth at the top and putting it on the lower end. Embankments are not usually more than 18 inches to 2 feet high, though they may occasionally be found on sloping ground not yet levelled as high as three or even four feet. The preparation of the embanked fields is an elaborate process. The object is to reduce the ground to a depth of some inches to a fine liquid mud. This is done by ploughing twice and then harrowing twice, then again ploughing once to four times according to the character of the soil, and finally harrowing again. Before this preparation heavy rain or ample irrigation is an absolute necessity. The first ploughing cannot be done till the ground is covered with some inches of water. When the above operation is complete, the rice seedlings in the nursery are pulled up and tied into bundles of perhaps 50 to 100. These are carried over to the embanked field and stacked on the embankment. The workers take a bundle each and separate it and plant four or five seedlings together; between each group of seedlings they leave an interval of from six inches to a foot. Twenty *kuros* (400 lbs.) of seed will transplant into from 2½ to 3 acres. The ordinary method of computation is that a *khandī*

or 20 *kuros* (400 lbs.) of seed-area is equivalent to 2½ acres, but this probably includes the contributions to village servants at sowing-time. Women are preferred to men for the work of transplantation and are said to work faster and more effectively. The seedlings lie flat for a day or two and then take root and stand erect. Dry weather is required for a few days after transplantation and then a certain amount of rain. Very heavy rain however beats them down to the ground where they remain stunted and fail to ear. Practically no weeding is required for the rice after it has been transplanted. The subsequent operations of reaping and threshing are the same for both kinds of rice, and will be described below.

Supply of water.

73. The critical times for transplanted rice, when an ample amount of water either from rain or from irrigation are required, are three: first at the time of sowing in the nurseries; second, at the time of transplantation; and third, when the grain is ripening in October. Except in 1899 the rain has never failed in recent years for sowing though in many years it has been delayed. Great anxiety is often caused by insufficient rain at the time of transplantation and frequently the rain does not continue long enough for transplantation to be completed throughout a village. Late transplantation as noted reduces the outturn very substantially. Very often the outturn of a promising crop is spoilt by the absence of rain in September and October. The famine of 1896-97 was entirely due to this, the rain up to the end of August having been above the average. The scarcity of 1902-03 was also largely due to the same cause. In 1904-05 a scanty rainfall in the earlier months was redeemed by a tremendous downpour in September and the crops were well up to the average. This bears on the question of irrigation, discussed in a later section.

Broadcast rice (*boātia*).

74. Transplanted rice, in spite of the large amount of labour involved, is much the most profitable method of sowing rice. A

cultivator will always transplant if he can. Sometimes he is unable. The heavy black soil of the south-west of the District cannot be worked by cattle in the way described, and rice there is always sown broadcast. Scanty early rain, want of labour, want of capital, and a desire for an early crop, are among the reasons which induce a cultivator to sow broadcast. The soil is usually ploughed up for broadcast rice in the hot weather, but red soil cannot be so prepared unless there is a timely fall of rain. The seed is scattered by hand, whether sown before or after the rains break, and is covered in either by ploughing with the *bakhar* or by harrowing with the *paththā*, any large clods being broken subsequently by hand. If he rice has not been sown before the rains break, and the rain is so continuous as to prevent the land being prepared, the seed is sometimes put in water until it begins to sprout, and in this state is thrown into the mud. This method of sowing is called *kawdak*. It has often been believed that a great deal more seed is used in broadcast than in transplanted rice; but in this District broadcast rice is always sown thin, 30 to 40 seers to the acre in black soil and 40 to 60 seers in red soil. As a consequence the Chhattīsgarh practice of *biāsi* or thinning the crop with a plough, is most uncommon; and is, I believe, confined to the zamīndāris on the east, where many of the cultivators have come from Chhattīsgarh. Weeding twice or thrice is, however, needed if the crop is to be a good one, and this is done by hand.

Harvesting and threshing.

75. The harvesting of light rice begins early in September, and reaping of different kinds goes on more or less continuously until early in December. Usually the better the class of rice, the later it is reaped. Much however depends on the character of the late rainfall. In 1902 every blade of rice that was worth cutting was in by the middle of November. Reaping is a slow and primitive business, done by hand with a sickle; in the present scarcity of agri-

cultural labour a cheap reaping machine adapted to small fields would be a great boon, but there seems to be no machine on the market in the least suitable for rice. After being cut the crop lies for two or three days on the grounds to dry, and is then stacked on the threshing floor, which is usually one of the drier fields stamped hard. Each cultivator has his own threshing floor, and keeps his produce rigorously separate from every one else. The threshing is done by bullocks. 'The treading out the corn' is probably similar to the method described in the Old Testament, and the cultivators certainly heed the precept about not muzzling the ox. A row of bullocks are tethered to a post in the centre round which they walk in an irregular line, and under much urging by their owners. During the threshing and winnowing operations the grain lies on the threshing floor, and though watched at night, forms a tempting object of theft. When these operations are complete, it is stored at home.

Outturn.

76. The standard outturn of rice for this District is 1500 lbs. an acre. A large number of experiments made by Mr. Napier during the settlement gave an average of 1522 lbs. from irrigated land and 893 lbs. from unirrigated land. Experiments have shown in a few cases crops of over 3000 lbs. and one astonishing experiment gave an outturn of nearly 4500 lbs., but I rather doubt this experiment. The people speak of a 10 to 15 fold outturn as normal for irrigated land, and will occasionally admit 20 on the best land, which is equivalent to over 3000 lbs. (taking 8 *kuros* or rather less as the seed).

Juār.

77. An important crop in the District is juār. Of this there are two varieties, one an autumn and the other a spring or cold weather crop. The preparation of the land for juār is simple, consisting of one or two ploughings and one harrowing. The cost of seed-grain is very small. It is usually grown in light and high-lying soil, and is regarded as of very little importance compared with rice. It is very liable to be

stunted by excessive rain, and a year in which rice does well will be a bad one for juār. The area under it has naturally increased in the recent dry years. Along the banks of the Waingangā however juār is sown as a principal crop, and does extremely well, often growing to ten feet or more in height. The cold weather variety is generally sown in combination with some other crop. A single holding not infrequently contains (1) wheat and juār, (2) gram and juār, (3) linseed and juār, (4) wheat and gram, (5) wheat alone to the annoyance of the patwāri, and the confounding of an inspecting officer. The spring crop variety runs small, seldom over four feet high, with a comparatively thin stalk. The grain of juār is very largely used for food, the more valuable rice being sold. The stalks are used as fodder, and are most valuable in the hot weather when natural fodder fails. Reaping is a laborious business, each ear being cut separately as it is ripe. For the rains crop variety the harvest begins in November or the beginning of December and continues till well into February. For the cold weather crop called *ringnī* juār, it begins at the end of March and ends about the end of April. Watching the fields at the time the grain is ripening puts a severe tax on the people. Juār has many enemies, both birds and animals delighting in it. In consequence, the crop has to be watched day and night. A small platform is built in the middle of the field on which some one sits all day and all night, and every possible device is used to scare away marauders. In the daytime slings are often used, and long strings are run from the platform and connected with clappers of various kinds situated all over the field. But the principal weapon, especially at night, is the human voice, and the night is made hideous by a series of long-drawn howls which it is difficult at first to believe come from a human throat.

Sugarcane.

78. Sugarcane is a dwindling crop. At the 30 years' settlement there were 11,000 acres under it, but it has shrunk gradually year

by year, till now there are little over 2000 acres. The reason for this decrease is that which has affected sugarcane throughout the Province. The imported sugar is cheaper than that grown locally. Some attempts have been made, without much success, to introduce improved methods of manufacture. But probably the only thing which would save it would be the establishment of a mill in the immediate neighbourhood of land suitable for sugarcane, where there is permanent irrigation. The best class of sugarcane is practically not grown now. The inferior sort called *kathai* is grown even at Nawegaon. Compared with the better sorts it gives about half the outturn of unrefined sugar per acre, but the growing cane is hardly sweet to the taste, and therefore does not attract wild animals, and three or even four crops may be taken from the same roots. It is therefore much cheaper to grow.

Methods of cultivation.

79. The ploughing of sugarcane land usually begins as soon as the bullocks are free from work in the rice-fields, and land is often ploughed six or seven times and the clods are finally reduced to powder by a heavy beam called *mahī* being dragged over them by three or four yoke of bullocks. The surface is then prepared in squares for irrigation with slight ridges to hold up the water. When the previous year's crop is cut in December or January, the tops of the canes, about 1 foot to 1 foot 3 inches in length, are cut off and preserved for setting for the new crop. It seems that the crop of the good varieties must be set within a week, but that of *kathai* does not suffer from being kept 15 days or even a month. The ground must be well watered for an hour or two before setting the cuttings, which are thinly covered with mud. More irrigation is necessary until the cane begins to sprout, and again from time to time according to the soil and necessities of the crop. In about a month, when the shoots are about 9 inches high, the field should be manured, the manure being mixed in and the soil

round the roots loosened with a *kudāli* or spud. This manuring is repeated a month later with the best varieties, but in the case of *kathai* the soil is only loosened and no manure added. The crop must be cleared of grass and weeds a month later or so, and then nothing more is required, except irrigation, until it is ready to cut in the following December or January. The *kathai* cane is very often allowed to stand for a second or third or even a fourth year. The names given to these crops are fantastic; the first is *raotī*, the second *khụ̄ti*, the third *būti*, and the fourth *chūti*. The deciding factor is the amount of water in the tank; if the owners of the tank reckon that there will be an excess of water over and above that required to irrigate all the new land taken up, they agree to give water to second crops. The better varieties of sugarcane are seldom allowed to stand more than a year.

Kodon-kutkī.

80. Kodon-kutkī, of which a large area is sown, is an extremely simple crop. One ploughing suffices, the lightest and most worthless soils are used, the crop ripens quickly, costs very little to sow and gives very little trouble to cultivate. In the Chāndpur tract, the poorer tenants sow these millets to provide themselves with food, and go to the manganese mines for the rest of the year, to earn cash wages. Many fields in this tract which once grew irrigated rice, are now abandoned to kodon.

Cotton.

81. Cotton was unknown in this District until a few years ago. The series of dry years which caused bad rice crops and the great prosperity of the cotton Districts suggested the idea of growing cotton in Bhandāra. The District Agricultural Association distributed some selected seed, and a Revenue Inspector newly come from a cotton District pushed it in his circle. The area under it has increased very much each year, stimulated by an extremely successful year in 1904-05. This year (1906-07) has been unfavourable to it, but the area

under it is about 20,000 acres, which for a crop unknown in the District five years ago is very large.

Wheat.

82. Wheat is grown in the same way as in Nāgpur. It is the principal crop of the Paunī tract where rice takes quite a second place. The fields are frequently ploughed as often as seven or eight times with the *nāgar* and *bakhar*. The seed is sown either with the *nāgar* if the soil is hard or not well prepared, or in other cases with the *tifan*, which sows three furrows at once. About 30 to 35 seers of wheat fall to the acre as a rule, but in the embanked lands of Paunī Chauras, a smaller kind of *tifan* is in use and more seed is required. Wheat is never weeded, though the weeds are sometimes removed from *gātas* (*i.e.*, embanked fields) at the time of ploughing.

After crops.

83. Linseed, urad and *lākhori* are largely grown as second crops by the *uterā* method, though each is also sown as a principal crop. In the *uterā* method the ground is not prepared at all and the seed is sown broadcast in a rice field often before the rice is reaped. The crop is naturally very thin and the outturn is only estimated at 100 lbs. per acre.

Total value of crops.

84. The following statement is a rough estimate of the total value of the crops of the District, taking the standard outturn on the area cropped in 1905-06, according to the prices ruling in that year. The values are not accurate, because the wholesale rates are only available for the important staples and for the others the retail rates have had to be taken. In order to make some approximation to accuracy however the retail rates have been reduced by 10 per cent. But it is probable that another 15 per cent. should be deducted in order to arrive at the amount actually received by the cultivators. The total value of crops calculated by the above method comes to nearly $2\frac{1}{2}$ crores. Owing to the high price of rice the produce of the District is very valuable at present, the rice crop alone being worth $1\frac{3}{4}$ crores.

Statement of value of crops.

Details of crops.	AREA, 1905-06.	STANDARD OUTTURN PER ACRE.	GROSS PRDOUCE.	VALUE RATE PER RUPEE, 1905.	GROSS VALUE.	Value of crop on an acre.
	Thousands of acres.	lbs.	Thousands of lbs.	lbs.	Thousands of rupees.	
					Rs.	Rs.
Rice ...	433	915*	396,365	23½	1,68,67	39
Wheat ...	95	540	51,433	27½	18,70	20
Juār ...	88	400	35,055	35	10,02	11
Kodon-kutkī ...	30	192*	5,686	38	1,50	5
Linseed ...	69	230	15,859	20	7,93	12
Gram ...	45	500	22,431	35	6,41	14
Cotton ...	21	44*	945	4·4	2,15	10
Arhar ...	15	300	4,595	26	1,77	12
Tiurā lākh ...	110	180	19,822	22	9,01	8
Urad, mūng, &c.	61	200	12,116	22	5,51	9
Sugarcane ...	2	3,500	7,924	8·8	8,00	398
Other crops ...	79	300	23,846	66	3,61	5
Total ...	1,049	...	596,075	...	2,43,27	...

IRRIGATION.

Tank irrigation.

85. As will be seen from a previous section, rice, and especially transplanted rice, require a great deal of water. It is said to be an aquatic plant which always requires water at its roots. And though this may not be absolutely accurate, it needs at any rate either standing water or a wet soil at most stages of its growth. With an average rainfall of less than 50

* Cleaned produce.

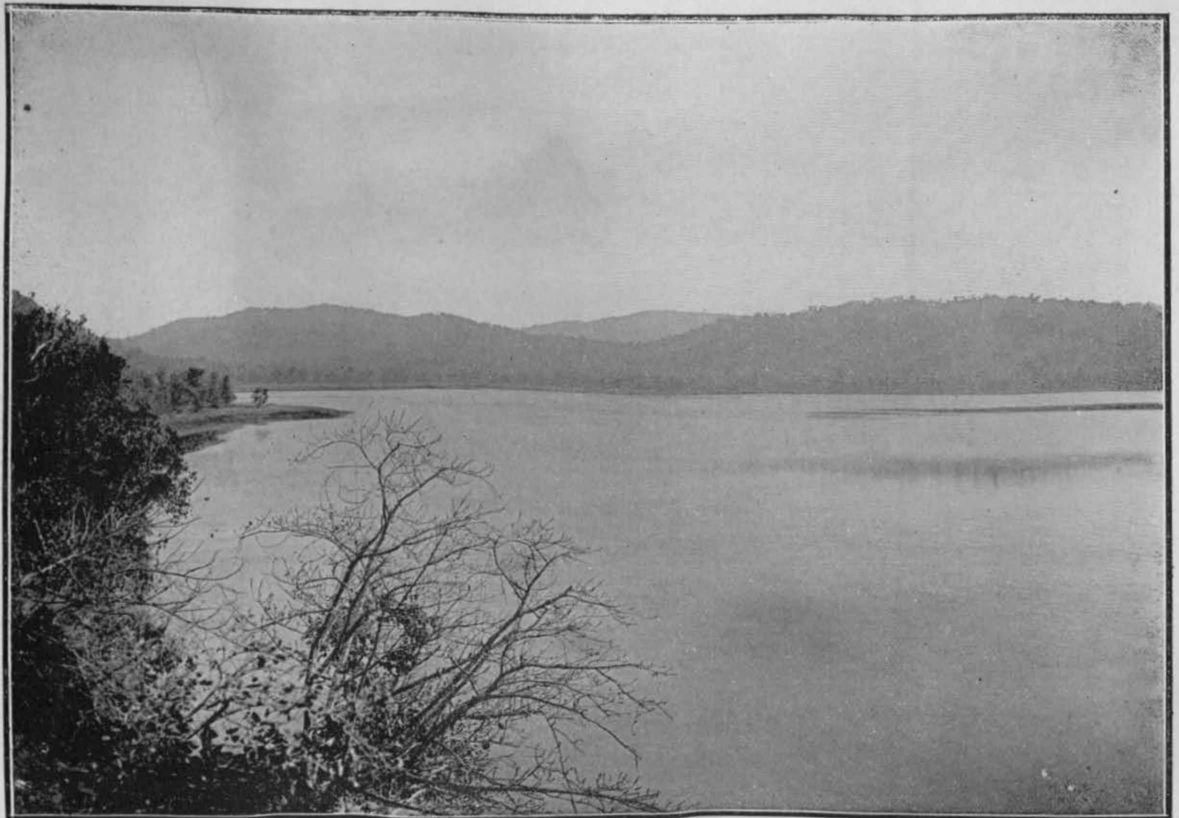


Photo Etching. Roorkee College.

SIDE VIEW OF NAWEGAON TANK.

inches it is obvious that a crop of this kind cannot be grown successfully by the aid of the natural supply of water alone. The physical features of this District lend themselves remarkably to the construction of irrigation tanks, and the inhabitants have to a wonderful extent taken advantage of the natural facilities of the country. The area under rice depends directly on the number of such irrigation tanks. The construction of tanks was undoubtedly much stimulated by the policy of the Marāthās by which the patel of a village only held for a limited period, while the completion of an improvement in the village gave him a claim to a renewal of his lease.

It was hoped when the grant of proprietary rights was made by the British Government that the sense of ownership would still further stimulate the desire to make improvements. But it cannot be said that this expectation has been altogether fulfilled.

The tanks may be divided into two classes :—

(*a*) Those constructed at the foot of the low ranges of hills scattered all over the District, by throwing a bund across a narrow valley between two hill spurs to intercept its drainage.

(*b*) Those constructed by throwing a long low bund across the broad shallow drainage lines of the plain country.

In tanks of the first kind the catchment area varies from one to over twenty square miles, and many of them are of considerable size. A few of them have masonry sluices and a considerable number have hollow trunks of trees or similar devices built into the bund to act as sluices. The ends are closed with wooden plugs and mud, which are opened as water is required.

Nawegaon tank.

86. The largest and best known of them, Nawegaon, merits a detailed description. It is situated in a basin almost surrounded by hills and only two bunds had to be made. One is 2244 feet long and 30

feet high, and the other 330 feet long and 40 feet high. They are constructed of earth with a loose pitching. The tank is said to have been constructed about 300 years ago by an ancestor of the present mālguzār. It has a waste weir 286 feet long and there is a steady flow all the year round through the main irrigation outlet, which is never completely closed. There is one main irrigation channel irrigating four villages, and one small one irrigating one village. The tank has a catchment area of 23 square miles and a waterspread area of about 5 square miles. It irrigates about 2250 acres, nearly all rice, and it absolutely protects this area against any famine conditions that have yet been experienced in this District. In the year 1899 when the failure of the rains reduced the total cropped area of the Sākoli tahsil by 31 per cent., the area in the 5 villages protected by this tank increased slightly, and a sixteen anna crop of rice and sugarcane was reaped. The Nawegaon people rather welcome famine as it does not affect their crops and increases the price they can get for their grain.

Seonī tank.

87. The next in importance is the tank at Seonī, also in the Sākoli tahsil, with a catchment area of $8\frac{1}{2}$ square miles and a waterspread area of 2 square miles. This tank in 1899, though not quite so successful as Nawegaon, gave a sixteen anna crop of rice on a slightly reduced area to the three villages that it serves After these two lakes come a large number of others in a descending scale of size and effectiveness, till one gets to those of one square mile catchment area which fail entirely in a year of famine.

Small tanks.

88. Tanks of the second class are usually small, though occasionally they have a catchment area of two or three square miles. They have as a rule no sluice and a very primitive waste-weir, if any. The water is let out by cutting a channel through the embankment, which is filled up again in the following hot weather.



Photo Etching. Roorkee College.

EMBANKMENT OF SEONI TANK.

If the water is wanted early in the rains the cut is made near the end of the embankment, and as much water as will run through at this high level is allowed to go. Very often water is not wanted for the crops until September or October. The cut is then made nearer the middle, and the water is sometimes led to it by digging a channel in the bed of the tank to draw off all that is available. In dry years and in the larger tanks a *mot* or other lifting arrangement is sometimes used for a short period so as to make use of any water that remains in the tank below the level of the bottom of the cut. Many of these were in use in 1902-03; but it is rather a counsel of despair. In ordinary years enough water is drawn off for the crops by the cut alone. The bed of the tank or part of it is often used for *rabi* cultivation after the water has been run off.

Statistics of tanks.

89. In the annual agricultural statistics no distinction is made between the two classes of tanks, nor indeed would it serve any useful purpose, since the object of both kinds is to irrigate rice, and the effectiveness of a tank for this purpose depends on its catchment area and similar considerations and not on its class.

Now the most striking thing about the number of irrigation tanks given in the returns is that it fluctuates violently from year to year. In 1902-03 it is given at 12,300, in 1903-04 only 8600 are put down, and in 1904-05 the number has risen to 9800 This does not of course mean that in 1902-03 (a year when the rainfall was only 29 inches) nearly 4000 tanks were destroyed or that 1200 were built between 1903-04 and 1904-05. For the purposes of the returns an irrigation tank is one that is actually used for irrigation in the year in question, and it is conceivable—though not likely—that in a specially wet year, Nawegaon itself might fall out of the category. The largest number of tanks is brought into use in a year in which there is plentiful early rain (which fills the tanks) followed by a

long break. If there is not much early rain the smaller ones do not fill. If the rain is well distributed the water is not used.

In the last 15 years the highest number ever used was 14,475 in 1901-02; and 1900-01 with 13,561 and 1902-03 with 12,317 are not far behind. On the other hand in the good years 1893-94 and 1903-04, only 9332 and 8603 tanks were brought into use. And in the wet years, 1891-92, and 1892-93, only 4300 were used.

Skill and industry of the cultivators.

90. The total number of tanks and *boris* that are occasionally used for irrigation is probably not less than 15,000. There are 1800 villages in the District, so this gives an average of over 8 to a village. This of course includes a large number of very small tanks. The average area irrigated varies very much from year to year, but probably from 15 to 25 acres per tank would not be far out. Nawegaon irrigates 2250 acres and many of the small tanks only irrigate an acre or two.

It is customary to hold up to the admiration of mankind the industry, perseverance and thrift of the peasants of Italy and the south of France, who have made a sterile country productive by terracing the whole face of the hill in which they live, and so making a series of tiny plateaus one below another on which crops and fruit trees can be grown. But I think that the list of irrigation works constructed in the District by the people of this country will compare not unfavourably even with the achievements mentioned above. Working without instruments, unable even to take a level, finding out their mistakes by the destruction of the works they had built, ever repairing, reconstructing, altering, they have raised in every village a testimony to their wisdom, their industry and their perseverance.

Government irrigation.

91. Government assistance to irrigation in this District dates from the time of the Irrigation Commission. The Commission indi-

cated the rice tracts of the Waingangā valley of which this District forms part, as one of the most suitable for irrigation in the Provinces. After considering various methods their conclusion was that we should have to depend mainly on storage reservoirs.

'The area which it will be possible to protect by the 'direct utilisation of the river supplies will at best comprise 'only a small proportion of the total area for which protection 'is required; and for the extensive areas that cannot be 'commanded in this way, reliance will have to be placed on 'a system of storage tanks. The conditions, especially in 'the rice Districts, are exceptionally favourable for the 'construction of these works. The general configuration of 'the surface lends itself to the storage of water; and the 'rainfall is, as we have shown, usually abundant and but little 'liable to severe fluctuation in the total annual amount.'[1] They strongly recommended the construction of large tanks, 'much larger than those hitherto made' and built and paid for by the State. The Commission further recommended that Government should take a share in the improvement of private tanks. 'If in the future any substantial progress is 'to be made in improving them (private tanks), we have no 'doubt that Government will have to render assistance and to 'contribute liberally in many cases towards the works which 'are now required................The contribution might take 'the shape of a grant-in-aid or of a loan on liberal terms [2]

'For the improvement of the tanks, higher professional 'skill will be required to prepare the designs and to exercise 'general supervision over the works. This will have to be 'supplied by the Public Works Department.'[3]

Major Works.

92. The scarcity of 1902-03 gave a special impetus to the carrying out of the recommendations of the Commission. A promising site for a major work, which appeared to be cheap to construct

[1] Irrigation Commission Report, para. 338.
[2] Para. 356. | [3] Para. 357.

and likely to command a considerable area, had been discovered at the north of the Gaikhurī hills between Tirorā and Gondia at a village called Khairbandā. The plans and estimates for a major work here had been drawn out to show to the Irrigation Commission and were ready when the scarcity came. Quietly and without ceremony, almost unnoticed except by a small group of officials, the construction of the tank at Khairbandā was started. And so opened a new policy for this District that will eventually be of great benefit to the people, and save many from the pain and misery that future failures of rain would otherwise inevitably bring. Another tank was started at Dugipār, but as the demand for work was not so great as had been anticipated, it was closed during the hot weather. A number of other large tanks were examined and estimates prepared.

In November 1905 a large work was opened at Chāndpur in the Tumsar tract, which is now (February 1907) rapidly approaching completion.

A number of estimates for other works have been prepared and are in various stages. If the present policy proves a financial success, it is hoped that the following parts of the District will eventually be protected against any possibility of famine.

(1) The whole tract between the Gaikhurī hills and the Waingangā river.

(2) A fairly large part of the country round Tumsar.

(3) The bulk of the south-eastern part of the Sākoli tahsīl.

(4) Scattered areas over the rest of the District.

The parts that at present it seems least likely that we shall be able to protect are the Chāndpur tract (where protection is most needed) and the north and east of the District. But in the event of the successful construction of the projected Waingangā canal, these tracts will also be reached.

Private tanks—Grants-in-aid.

93. Government has aided the construction of private tanks in two ways, by grants-in-aid and by *takāvi* loans. Both the construction of new tanks and the improve-

ment of existing ones, especially those that have breached or fallen into disrepair, is undertaken on the grant-in-aid system. The Deputy Commissioner selects the tank to be improved or the site for a new one, and obtains the mālguzār's consent to the improvement. The Public Works Department then supply an estimate of the cost of making the improvement. Half the estimate is met from a Government grant, and the other half the owner is expected to supply. It was originally provided that the owner could either pay his half in cash, or take a *takāvi* loan for the amount. But in practice a *takāvi* loan repayable in from 20 to 30 instalments has invariably been taken. The whole amount, both Government grant and private contribution, is then paid to the credit of the Public Works Department and the tank is constructed by that Department, the owner having no say in the method or detail of construction. When completed the tank is handed over to the owner, his principal obligation being to keep it in repair. A systematic annual inspection by the Public Works Department ensures that this obligation is fulfilled.

On these terms then a large number of tanks have been built, some for mālguzārs only, some for a combination of mālguzār and tenants, and one or two for combinations of tenants only. In 1902-03 under pressure of the scarcity no less than 28 were commenced, though some of these were closed in the hot weather when it was found that the demand for work was less than had been anticipated. Nearly all of those abandoned were however taken up in subsequent years. Up to date, 21 tanks have been completed, nine are under construction and a number of others are in various stages of investigation and survey. The typical grant-in-aid tank costs from Rs. 2000 to Rs. 4000 and is provided with a waste-weir and a masonry sluice. The embankment also is usually stronger and better made than that of the private tank. A few of the tanks undertaken on this system however come to from Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 15,000 and one or two have cost

Rs. 1000 or less. The number of tanks which it is possible to deal with on the grant-in-aid system is limited. It requires first that the tank should be worth improving and second that the owners should be willing to take their share in paying for the improvement. One has also to be careful that as much is not lost by flooding valuable ground, as would be gained by additional irrigation. A large number fo the tanks that have been investigated have been left untouched on one or other of these grounds. The programme for this District is probably not very far from completion.

Improvement loans.

94. In addition to the above a considerable amount of improvement to private tanks has been done by ordinary Land Improvement loans without a grant. The amount advanced under the Land Improvement Loans Act in the years 1902 to 1906, excluding the sums advanced for grant-in-aid tanks, was Rs. 47,600, and though a considerable part of this represents loans of small sums for petty repairs or for field embankments a part of it has been spent on irrigation tanks. When sums of over Rs. 300 are advanced, it has generally been provided that the money should be given in instalments and the work inspected by an officer not below the rank of a naib-tahsīldār before each instalment is paid. The owner is allowed to construct the work in his own way and in his own time. The periodical inspection makes it reasonably certain that the money or the bulk of it is spent on the work. A considerable number of tanks have been restored and repaired in this way. A group of 18 tanks near Gondia was done under the superintendence of Mr. MacNair in 1903 and a number of tanks in other parts of the District have been repaired under the supervision of the executive staff.

General conclusion.

95. The system of large tanks is still in the experimental stage There is no doubt that they are valuable to the people and will give them good crops when rain fails, and bring prosperity to the country they irrigate. It is however doubtful

if they will prove financially remunerative to Government. And it is probable that on this depends the question whether there will be any large extension of them in future. The grant-in-aid system has still a limited scope, and for some years to come one or two tanks a year can be taken up under it. But most of the works that can suitably be arranged for are already on the programme, and it will be increasingly difficult to find tanks which can be constructed under this system. For the simple *takāvi* loan there will always be a demand in this District, both for minor improvements and to restore tanks that have breached by heavy rain or been allowed to fall into disrepair.

CATTLE.

Plough cattle.

96. Cattle are largely bred in the District and the local cattle are generally used for cultivation. The quality is however only fair except in the tract of country north of Tumsar, where there are one or two good breeds of cattle, one of which is locally esteemed nearly as highly as the Gaolao breed of Wardhā. The fast trotting cattle used in tongās and *chhakrās* are for the most part imported, but it is possible to find a pair of bullocks able to trot fairly well with a tongā in almost every village. The working life of a bullock may be put at 8 to 10 years in the wheat country and 5 or 6 in rice. The bullocks in the rice country are worse fed, and suffer from being continually worked in water. A good pair of local bullocks will cost about Rs. 60. Imported ones are about double that, and they sometimes run as high as Rs. 200. Cattle are grazed through the rains and cold weather and are also given rice straw (*tanas*) and juār stalks (*karbī*). In the hot weather the grazing fails, and towards the end of the hot weather as a rule only juār stalks (chiefly of *ringnī* juār) remain. If the rains are much delayed the supply of this fodder becomes very scanty. Plough-bullocks are given grain and also oil-cake and mahuā for a month or two before

the working season and while they are in hard work. Fast trotting bullocks (generally the property of well-to-do people) get grain all the year round. The grain is usually gram, but wheat, bran and *lākhori* are also given. Salt is given to all bullocks at Polā and Diwāli, but at other times only valuable trotting bullocks get salt.

Buffaloes and small stock.

97. Buffaloes are usually imported from Saugor, Damoh and Mandlā, though there is a little local breeding. The females are kept for their milk and the *ghī* that is made from it, while the males are used for any form of extra heavy work such as wet ploughing in heavy soils or carting large timber. Goats and sheep are bred in the District, the former in large numbers. Goats are offered up in sacrifice at the beginning of cultivation and also at the festival of Shivrātri. The flesh is generally eaten by the castes that eat meat. Sheep are also eaten to some extent, but the flesh is not so highly esteemed as that of goats. They are chiefly kept for their wool, which is made locally into blankets. The manure of both sheep and goats is highly thought of by cultivators.

Disease and cattle-markets.

98. Anthrax is the commonest disease of cattle, then foot-and-mouth disease and then rinderpest. Inoculation has been tried for the last with some success. But as there is only one Veterinary Assistant in the District and the distances from headquarters are considerable, it is not always easy for him to get to the site of an outbreak in time to do much good.

There are no cattle fairs in the District, but cattle are sold at the weekly markets in many places. The largest and best known is the market at Amgaon. Cattle are brought to it not only from this District but also from all the surrounding country. Probably 5000 cattle come here every week. They are largely bought by agriculturists, but butchers also come up from Kamptee to buy cattle for slaughter, and the pious Hindu is not above selling his worn-out and useless cattle to butchers. Amgaon being on the

railway line is well situated for exporting the cattle to Nāgpur and Kamptee.

Statistics of stock.

99. The average numbers of stock in the District during the four years 1901—05 were as follows :—Bulls and bullocks 162,000; cows 125,000; cow-buffaloes 24,000; sheep 5000; goats 105,000; horses and ponies 1900. This gives a pair of bulls and bullocks to every 12 acres in cultivation and 69 cows to a village. The number of bulls and bullocks is smaller by 20,000 than in 1897-98, while that of cows is larger by nearly 10,000. The famine of 1897 had no effect on the numbers of stock, if the statistics are correct, as they were higher in the year after it than in that before it. During the two years 1898—1900 the number of bulls and bullocks decreased by 20,000 and those of cows and cow-buffaloes showed a smaller falling-off. Since 1901-02 there has curiously enough been a further decline in the numbers of bulls and bullocks, perhaps owing to the sale of worn-out and useless animals to the butchers. The number of goats has doubled in the last ten years.

CHAPTER V.

LOANS, PRICES, WAGES, MANUFACTURES, TRADE AND COMMUNICATIONS.

LOANS.

Government loans.

100. The system of Government advances for Land Improvement loans has been largely expanded in recent years, as an excellent method of providing work in seasons of distress. From 1874 to 1896 only about Rs. 60,000 were advanced in all under the two Acts of 1871 and 1883. Since that year nearly Rs. 3 lakhs have been advanced, principally in the famines of 1897 and 1900 and the scarcity of 1903. In 1897 special famine loans were granted without interest, the amount so given out being more than two lakhs. In 1899-00 the advances were very much smaller, as the village proprietors were not in a position to take loans. But a number of small tank works were undertaken by Government both directly and by means of grants to mālguzārs. In 1903 the 'grant-in-aid' scheme devised by Mr. Craddock as Commissioner of Nāgpur was introduced. By this tanks were constructed under Government supervision in mālguzāri villages, a half of the cost being borne by Government and a half by the mālguzār or the mālguzār and tenants jointly. A number of tanks were begun on these lines, and have been or are gradually being completed in subsequent years. In 1902-03, a sum of Rs. 41,000 was distributed under the system in 28 villages. Out of a total sum of Rs. 3·45 lakhs advanced in loans from 1873 to 1905, Rs. 1·64 lakhs have been recovered and Rs. 16,000 remitted, while Rs. 18,000 have been received on account of interest. Rs. 1·65 lakhs are outstanding. As these totals include famine loans advanced under the special condition of part remission of the principal, the results may be considered sufficiently favour-

able. Up to 1904-05, a total of 155 *sanads* or certificates were granted for works of improvement. Of these 71 were given for the improvement and two for the construction of tanks. In the other cases they were given for the improvement of fields or for sinking wells. Under the Agriculturists' Loans Act, transactions were similarly on a small scale up to 1895-96, but have reached very large dimensions in recent years. In 1897 about Rs. 70,000 were given out, in 1900 more than three lakhs, and three lakhs again in 1902-03. Altogether Rs. 9·8 lakhs were advanced from 1884 to 1905, of which Rs. 6·1 lakhs have been recovered and Rs. 2 lakhs remitted. Rs. 20,000 have been received on account of interest. In 1902-03 advances were made to the village as a unit, on the joint and several responsibility of all its recipients. This lessened the time and labour involved in distribution and gave a direct incentive to the villagers to prevent loans being granted in undeserving cases; should an untrustworthy applicant come forward the other cultivators would protest.

Private loans.

101. The rates of interest on private loans are the same as in other Districts. Large proprietors can get money at 6 per cent, while ordinary mālguzārs and tenants have to pay from 12 to 24, or even higher rates. Grain-loans of rice are usually made at 25 per cent. to reliable borrowers. The Court of Wards tried the system of making advances of grain at 12½ per cent., but found that it did not pay owing to the expense of storage and watch and ward. Oilseeds are lent at the rate of 50 to 100 per cent. A number of Pathān moneylenders have settled in the District and make small advances at exorbitant rates to the poorer classes. They often charge interest at 2 annas a rupee a month or 150 per cent. and extract payment by methods of terrorism. Rai Bahādur Anant Lāl gives an interesting account of the dishonest methods of the smaller moneylenders. 'The creditor makes large profits 'on the *mahīn-khāt* system, of which the following is an 'illustration. Suppose a man wants Rs. 20. He has to

'execute a bond for Rs. 25, payable in twenty-five monthly 'instalments of one rupee. Of the loan, the borrower 'receives actually only Rs. 17-12, the rest being accounted 'for as follows:—One rupee for *parvesī* or advance payment, 'one rupee for *dharmāvat*, apparently a present, and 4 'annas for *battā* or the moneylender's time; 4 annas for the 'stamp, 2 annas for the writing fee, 2 annas for the account-'book and one anna for the witnesses. The true rate of 'interest on the transaction thus works out to about 50 per 'cent. In making grain-loans the measurer uses his skill 'and succeeds in giving out only 19 *kuros* for 20 *kuros*, and 'when receiving takes 21 for 20 *kuros*. The borrower 'has also to contribute for the measurer and *bigāris* of the 'village. The debtors are steeped in ignorance. The 'majority of them are illiterate and even those who have 'received education in primary schools have reaped little 'benefit from it. I heard of debtors who could be duped into 'a belief that the month of Phāg was not one month, the 'creditor counting it four times over, and calling the same 'period by four different names, *i.e.* Phāg, Phālgun, Simgā 'and Holī.'

Moneylenders.

102. A somewhat peculiar feature of the District finance is that the leading bankers reside in Nāgpur. Generally therefore the relations between debtor and creditor are of a purely commercial nature and lack the consideration which is sometimes shown by mālguzārs to their own cultivators. On the other hand, some of the Nāgpur bankers, notably Mr. Chitnavīs and Rājā Raghujī Rao Bhonsla were most generous during the conciliation proceedings. The most important of the Nāgpur bankers are Krishna Rao Amrit Būti, Rāmchandra Amrit Būti, Jāgeshwar Murlīdhar Būti, Bālajī Vināyak Būti, Atmāram Amrit Būti, Nārāyan Shrīdhar Naik of Umrer, Mr. G. M. Chitnavīs, and the Bhonslas. The chief among he local creditors is Ganpat Rao Yādava Rao whose business extends all over the District; the zamīndārs of Gond-Umrī

and Amgaon, and the Kunbī proprietor of Saolī-Dongargaon. Many of the local Mārwāri moneylenders suffered heavily in the famines and are now involved. A new class of small creditors has risen from the Mahār caste. These men have given up drinking and lead an abstemious life, wishing to raise themselves in social estimation. Mr. Napier found twenty or more village kotwārs carrying on moneylending transactions on a small scale, and, in addition, many of the Mahārs in towns were exceedingly well off.

The agricultural classes before the famines.

103. At the time of Mr. Napier's settlement, detailed inquiries into the condition of the tenantry showed that about 20 per cent. of the whole number were well to do and free from debt with substantial holdings; about 60 per cent. were in average circumstances, indebted to a moderate amount, and working usually with borrowed grain; and about 20 per cent. were hopelessly involved or without cattle. The last class included a number of holders of mere garden plots, who do not strictly belong to the tenant class, but were included in it to preserve their rights. Even so the above results were distinctly favourable. Mr. Napier found that arrears of rent were usually most heavy in the villages of the richest proprietors, who were content to leave their rents uncollected, as they obtained good interest on their capital, well secured by holdings in their own villages. While the smaller men had to collect rents in order to meet the revenue demand. This is quite in consonance with the features of agricultural indebtedness observed in other Districts. Of the proprietors Mr. Napier wrote[1] :—'Many, even leaving 'the rich moneylenders out of consideration, are very well-'to-do; but a large number at the same time are overloaded 'with debt. In nearly every case the debt has been started 'with some silly extravagance, but once begun it has gone 'on increasing, often with but little fault on the part of land-'holders. When once a man has got seriously into debt

[1] Settlement Report, para. 21.

'it is only by a good deal of self-denial that he can pay off 'his encumbrances. Statistics however prove that there 'has not been a great change of land from the agricultural 'to the non-agricultural castes. Non-agriculturists, such 'as Brāhmans, Kāyasths and Baniās, have gained a certain 'number of villages, but mostly, it would seem, at the 'expense of Muhammadans and Marāthās, and of the abori-'ginal and pastoral tribes.' A comparison of the number of villages held by different castes at the 30 years' settlement and in 1901-02 shows that the agricultural castes with the exception of Kunbīs had generally lost ground during the intervening period. Kohlīs especially held only 136 villages at the end of the period as against 299 at the beginning, while the number owned by Ponwārs declined from 313 to 289 and by Lodhīs from 185 to 166. Kunbīs increased their estate from 154 to 195 villages. The villages owned by Gonds fell from 271 to 80 and by Muhammadans from 174 to 91. Baniās, Brāhmans and Telis owned an increased number of villages.

Indebtedness in recent years.

104. When R. B. Anant Lāl made detailed inquiries into the condition of the people in the course of his conciliation proceedings[1] in 1902-03, the state of things was very much worse, as a result of the famines. He found that in the least affected tracts, Paunī and Partābgarh parganas, the amount of indebtedness was three times the land revenue; in Kāmtha, Rāmpailī and Tirorā it was six times the land revenue; in Ambāgarh, Bhandāra and Sāngarhī, ten times the land revenue; and in Chāndpur eleven times. Mr. Anant Lāl's statistics apparently refer to the combined indebtedness of proprietors and tenants, which might have been given separately; as it is his figures are principally valuable as showing the relative position of different tracts of the District. Between 1896 and 1905, 86 whole villages and 326 shares,

[1] Note on the Conciliation Proceedings in the Bhandāra District. Letter No. 4876, dated 1st September 1905, from the Commissioner, Nāgpur, to the Chief Secretary.

being equivalent together to a total of 179 villages or about a tenth of the number in the District, were transferred. The Government revenue on the property transferred was Rs. 46,000 or about a twelfth of the District demand, and the consideration for the property was Rs. 5·13 lakhs or between eleven and twelve times the land revenue. This is a low multiple as compared with that recorded in other Districts, though the number of villages transferred is not very high. Moneylenders gained by 147 transfers or 36 per cent. of the total number and agriculturists lost by 175 or 42 per cent. In the case of property transferred privately or by order of the civil courts during the last few years the multiple of the revenue on the property realised as consideration has also been low, not amounting to more than about 12 per cent., and the figures show that landed property in Bhandāra still suffers from depreciation in value.

Conciliation proceedings.

105. A large proportion of the agricultural class had been reduced to a state of almost hopeless insolvency as a result of the famines. The Deputy Commissioner wrote in 1902 :—'There 'has been a very distinct decrease in expenditure on luxuries. 'Where a marriage feast had formerly lasted for a fortnight, 'invitations were issued for only four or five days at the 'utmost, and fewer people were invited. It was also very 'striking how among the Ponwārs, the pony and the spare 'pair of bullocks for driving in the native *rengī* disappeared. 'It had always been a point of honour with them to have some 'spare conveyance, which they could lend to a friend or use 'themselves for show.' The Commissioner, Mr. Craddock, when marching through Chāndpur in 1901 was so struck with the reduced condition of the tenantry that he at once recommended the introduction of proceedings for the conciliation of debts. These were conducted by R.B. Anant Lāl and were subsequently extended as regards the tenants to the other badly affected tracts, and as regards proprietors to the whole District. The proceedings lasted from 1902 to 1905 and were

eminently successful. The operations affected 905 proprietors and 12,211 tenants and the debts dealt with aggregated 48 lakhs of rupees or more than eight times the land revenue of the District. Out of these debts a total of 20 lakhs or 41 per cent. was remitted, of which 6 lakhs were secured by mortgage and nearly 2 lakhs by decrees. The balance of debt was made payable by instalments, with or without future interest as circumstances dictated or creditors proved indulgent. In some cases property actually foreclosed or sold for debt was recovered. In 172 cases where the debtor had no means to pay anything, his whole debt was wiped out on payment of a cow or transfer of trees of nominal value. The cases of 12 zamīndārs were included in the proceedings. Creditors generally acted in a very generous manner, the most prominent among them being the minor Ganpat Rao Yādava Rao whose estate remitted Rs. 2·15 lakhs, Mr. Ganpat Rao Ghatāte of Nāgpur and Mr. Gangādhar Rao Chitnavīs.

Material condition of the people.

106. The following note on the condition of the people has been contributed by the Deputy Commissioner, Mr. E. Danks :—

'The District enjoyed considerable prosperity in the period that elapsed between the 30 years' settlement and the beginning of the famine years. There have never been any large towns and during this time it depended almost entirely upon agriculture. It was very thickly populated and evidences of its prosperity are to be found in the large number of private irrigation works built, and in the solid character of the houses, especially in the open country. The density of population is the more striking in that a large portion of the District is under forest. As a natural result of its dense population and its almost complete dependence upon agriculture, the District was very hard hit by the famine years. The cropped area reached its height in 1893-94, when it was nearly 900,000 acres. In succeeding years it dropped each year with one partial recovery to little more than 650,000 acres in 1899-00. For the next three years it fluctuated between

750,000 and 800,000; since that time it has generally risen again to nearly 850,000.' The area under rice, by far the most important crop in the District, showed a larger proportionate decrease and has not recovered so much. Mr. Craddock wrote in 1901 as follows:—'When I took charge 'of the division in 1901 the outlook was gloomy and there 'were suggestions in the air for the opening of kitchens '(this though the rainfall of 1900-01 had been excellent); 'I marched through the Chāndpur pargana early in May and 'found what seemed hopeless debt and despondency; little 'or no revenue had been paid, and no orders for suspension 'or remission had been passed.' Vigorous measures of relief were taken.

'The conciliation of private debts, a species of informal bankruptcy, was begun in 1901 under the charge of Rai Bahādur Anant Lāl and concluded in 1905. The revenue demand was also decreased in 418 villages and the programme of public and private irrigation works described in another chapter was pushed on as fast as staff and funds would permit. The effect of these measures on the agricultural classes has been most marked even in the few years that have since elapsed. Relieved of an overwhelming load of debt, with the revenue demand reduced in every village which could fairly justify it, and with a large number of irrigation works built under the stimulus and mainly at the expense of Government, the area under cultivation has steadily increased year by year and the people are with rare exceptions solvent and content. The number of minor improvements of land that are being made by private persons at their own expense, and the number of new houses that have been and are being built are a striking proof of the improvement of the condition of the agricultural population. The alteration in the position of the labourer is even greater. Between 1891 and 1901 the population of the District fell by nearly eighty thousand people or between 10 and 11 per cent. In the year 1902-03 when there was again scarcity

though the death-rate remained low, a very large emigration took place, estimated at the time at fifty to sixty thousand people; a large proportion of these did not return to the District as they found remunerative employment elsewhere. The consequence is that the strength of the labouring population has been very greatly decreased. At the same time some large and many small public works have been begun, the manganese industry has made a sudden and expanding demand for labour, and reviving agriculture has begun once more to ask for its former supply. The supply of labour is totally inadequate to meet the demand. Attempts to import workers from other parts of the Province have not been very successful for various reasons, and the labourer holds command of the situation. The wages of unskilled labour have doubled in the last few years. The manganese industry is paying famine prices for the carts it wants to convey the ore to the railway. The labouring classes are enjoying a period of prosperity unparalleled in the previous history of the District.'

PRICES.

Rice and wheat.

107. Rice is the staple food-grain of the District. The average price of husked rice during the period of seven years (*1861—68*) preceding the last settlement was 53 lbs. to the rupee. It rose largely just afterwards on account of the famine of 1869, when the rate in Bhandāra was 24 lbs. The rate fell to an average of 37 lbs. between 1870 and 1877, rose to 22 lbs. in 1878 and 1879 and fell to 42 lbs. in 1883. During the seven years 1887—1894, the average of which was taken as the rate prevailing at the recent settlement, the price was 26 lbs. As compared with the period before the 30 years' settlement the price of rice had therefore doubled. In the market of Nāgpur, which must determine the rates obtaining in Bhandāra the price of rice had more than doubled during the same period. During the decade 1891—1900 the average rate varied between 18 and 27 lbs. to the rupee, the former figure

being that of the famine of 1897. Between 1901 and 1903 the rate was 21 lbs., in 1904, 26 lbs., and in 1905, 23 lbs. The average enhancement in the rental made at last settlement was only 38 per cent. or nothing approaching the increase in the prices of agricultural produce, and since the settlement, the price of rice has been in nearly every year slightly higher than that taken at settlement. The rate at Bhandāra does not vary much at different seasons, but appears to be 2 to 4 lbs. lower in the months following the harvest than in those preceding it. Wheat generally appears to be about 2 lbs. per rupee cheaper than rice, though differences in the harvest will make the relative prices of the two grains vary considerably. During the years 1861—68 Mr. Napier found the average price of wheat to be 50 lbs. and during the years 1887—1894, 33 lbs. or 7 lbs. cheaper than rice. During the decade ending 1900 the average price was 26 lbs. and the cheapest rate recorded since 1890 is 33 lbs. In 1904-05 the rate was 26 to 28 lbs. or about 2 lbs. cheaper than rice. Gram is generally about 4 lbs. cheaper than wheat and 6 lbs. cheaper than rice, the difference in price tending to increase in prosperous seasons, while in famine years the rates approximate more closely. No returns of the price of juār are available in recent years.

Miscellaneous articles.

108. For the fifteen years preceding the abolition of the customs line in 1874 the price of salt averaged 15 lbs. to the rupee. Between 1875 and 1890 the average price was 19½, varying between 18 and 22 lbs., and nearly the same rate prevailed during the next ten years. In 1903 the price fell to 23 lbs. owing to the reductions of the duty, and after a temporary increase to 20 lbs. in 1904 declined again to 24 lbs. in 1905. Up till recently foreign sugar was generally used, but the article manufactured in Northern India is coming into favour. The wholesale rate of foreign sugar is Rs. 8 to Rs. 10 a maund and the retail rate 8 to 10 lbs. to the rupee, while Mirzāpurī sugar from Northern India costs

5 to 6 lbs. The best *gur* or unrefined sugar sold in Bhandāra is from the Bellary District and fetches 8 lbs. a rupee. Ordinary *gur* is sold at from 8 to 10 lbs. and the inferior kind produced in Bhandāra from the *kathai* cane at 11 lbs. *Ghī* now costs about a rupee a seer in the country and a little more than that in towns, while milk is 9 to 10 seers a rupee and in the hot weather months sometimes rises to 7½ seers. Brass vessels if sold by weight cost R. 1-8 a seer and those of bell metal Rs. 2-8. A cartload of 10 maunds of firewood costs about Rs. 2-8 and a family of five persons will consume five or six cartloads annually, their expenditure thus being about Rs. 13. Juār-stalks fetch Rs. 35 to Rs. 40 a thousand bundles, the price having more than doubled in the last few years. A pair of loin-cloths of coarse cotton cloth cost about Rs. 3 and a pair of silk-bordered cloths Rs. 5 to Rs. 15.

WAGES.

Farm-servants.

109. Farm-servants are generally engaged by the year and are known as *chākar* or *nagaria*. Up till recently they were always paid in grain, but in the vicinity of Bhandāra cash wages are often now substituted, and the rate has risen to five or six rupees a month. During the last year or two there has been an acute demand for labour as the population was largely depleted by emigration during the scarcity season of 1903. Many of the labouring classes went to Berār, where good wages were obtainable, and have not returned. At the same time the construction of the new railway and the opening of the manganese mines have created an extra demand and raised the level of wages. As a consequence farm-servants and labourers are in a very advantageous position. Sometimes they stipulate that their employer shall sell them rice at a seer per rupee cheaper than the market rate. And if they work after sundown they expect to get the evening meal. This state of things is however mainly confined to the Chāndpur tract in which the mines are situated, and

elsewhere labour is still obtainable at a moderate wage. In the Bhandāra tahsīl grain wages are stated to be 8 small *kuros* or 120 lbs. a month of unhusked rice and Rs. 4 as an annual present, known as *jīwan*. Besides this the farm-servant gets a *bhārā* or headload of rice-stalks at harvest containing from 15 to 30 lbs. of grain, and a *kharā* containing from 30 to 40 lbs. when the grain is carried home after threshing. The farm-servant also receives a pair of shoes and a blanket every year, and is allowed to take the gleanings of rice fields and the sweepings of the threshing-floor. He also gets food at three or four festivals and similar presents at the harvest of wheat and juār if his employer grows these crops. All this works out to little more than Rs. 3 a month. Another wage is 10 small *khandīs* or about 2500 lbs. of unhusked rice a year and four rupees. Taking unhusked rice at 60 lbs. to the rupee this works out to Rs. 46 a year or a little under four rupees a month. The farm-servant's wife is often bound to work for his employer when required. She gets ordinary wages and also an annual retaining fee of a cartload of wood, eight annas worth each of salt and chillies and 200 bundles of grass for thatching her house. In return for this she may not work for anyone else when her husband's master requires her services. Grain wages are said to have increased by about 20 per cent. in the last ten years. Occasionally the proprietor sows about half an acre of land for the wives of his farm-servants, who cut the crop and divide the produce between them. A head farm-servant is called *awāri* and is paid a little more than the others.

Labourers.

110. At last settlement (1894—96) Mr Napier recorded the rates of wages as follows[1] :—'Two annas a day is the maximum daily 'wage of a casual labourer, while in many cases a woman 'works 16 days and a man 12 days for a rupee and one 'meal of rice in the day.' Since this period there has

[1] Settlement Report, para. 19.

been a marked rise in the rate of wages. When labour is scarce, as at the time of transplantation of rice, a woman may be paid 2 to 3 annas and a man 3 to 4 annas a day. For weeding the crops for a day of six or seven hours a woman gets 6 pice in Sākoli. At harvesting a woman is paid 2 lbs. of juār or wheat or 4 lbs. of unhusked rice, and a man gets twice as much. The condition of the labouring classes has improved and they can now afford a good meal of rice, whereas formerly they often had nothing better than *ambil* or a paste made of a small quantity of rice boiled in a panful of water. They have regular loin-cloths reaching to the knee instead of merely short pieces of cloth covering the thighs. Labourers on the railway can also afford *bandīs* or cotton coats and caps.

Village servants.

111. A village menial is called Aikarī and the village servants are known collectively as Aiaikarī. The Lohār and Barhai, or blacksmith and carpenter, are each paid 6 small *kuro*s or 90 lbs. of unhusked rice annually for repairing the iron and wooden implements of agriculture. Sometimes the rate is a little higher and they also receive presents of a few pounds more at sowing and harvest-time. For making the share of a new plough or *bakhar* the blacksmith is paid 15 lbs. of grain for his labour, the iron also being supplied; for a new yoke 7½ lbs. are paid. The washerman and barber are now often paid according to services rendered. If they receive an annual due, it is 75 to 90 lbs. of unhusked rice, or the barber may be paid 16 lbs. for each adult male in the family.

MANUFACTURES.

Silk.

112. The weaving of silk-bordered cloths is a substantial industry in Bhandāra, and has not yet been very seriously affected by the competition of the mills. The principal centres are Bhandāra, Paunī, Mohāli and Andhārgaon, and the number of persons employed is about 6000. In Bhandāra the

uparnā or shoulder-cloths and loin-cloths are generally woven. Silver-gilt thread is sometimes embroidered on the borders, and cloths consisting wholly of silk are made to order. A Mohāli women's *sāris* or body-cloths and *cholīs* or breastcloths are produced, the value of the most expensive *sāri* being about Rs. 40. Paunī produces men's cloths fringed with green silk. Loin-cloths cost from Rs. 10 to Rs. 50. The Paunī cloths are considered to be the best in the District and are cheaper than those of Umrer though not of such good quality. Cloths with borders of red silk are also woven in several other villages. Silk thread is obtained from Assam through Nāgpur ready-dyed and cotton thread from the Nāgpur mills. Counts of 40, 50, and 60 are generally used and in Paunī as fine as 80. The cloths are sent to neighbouring Districts and in small quantities to Hyderābād and Bombay. At Mūndhri the Gadhewāl Koshtīs spin tasar silk from cocoons brought from Assam.

Cotton.

113. Ordinary country cloth is also produced in considerable quantities by Mahārs, who live in large numbers in Tumsar and the surrounding villages. The number of persons engaged in the cotton industry in 1901 was about 40,000, but had decreased by more than 50 per cent. since 1891. The annual sales of thread in Tumsar are estimated at 5 lakhs of rupees. Mill-spun thread of counts of 16, 18 and 20 is generally used. A considerable number of weavers also reside in the villages of Kardī, Jām, Sihorā, and Chūlhad. In Bhāgri and other villages thick cotton cloth called *khādi* is woven for winter wear. The thread used is of 12 or 14 counts and is woven double, so that it is practically waterproof. At Benī carpets and bedding-sheets are woven by Mehrās and dyed and printed by Chhīpas. Benī has also a considerable dyeing industry, employing about 500 persons, and other dyeing centres are Murdāda, Paunī and Mohāli. Cloths and carpets are dyed red with alizarine and black with indigo. A grey dye is made by mixing burnt paper with

iron filings. Mārwāri dyers colour head-cloths and handkerchiefs with imported dyes in light colours.

Metals.

114. A considerable number of Sonārs work in gold and silver in Bhandāra, Mohāli and Tumsar and a smaller number in most other large villages. The ornaments made are heavy and have no distinction of workmanship. Silver ornaments are usually made by hammering and not by casting. Bhandāra has a fairly large brass-working industry, the castes engaged being Kasārs, who originally came from Northern India, and Panchāls from the south. Brass is imported in sheets from Bombay and old vessels are bought at half price and melted down. All kinds of cups and plates and large *gunds* and *gangāls* or water-vessels are made. The Panchāls manufacture them also from *kānsa*, a mixture of copper and zinc. Articles made from this sell at Rs. 2-8 a seer as against R. 1-4 to R. 1-8 for brass vessels. Cheap vessels of alloy of lead, zinc, copper or other metals are also made and are known as *bharat*. Copperware is not usually made except to order as Hindus do not use it. Iron nut-cutters and other articles are made with imported iron in Kāmtha and Pāngri. In Kanerī in Sākoli tahsīl a soapstone quarry is worked and stone cups and jars are made. These are used for holding curds and acids which would corrode brass.

Miscellaneous industries.

115. Large quantities of cart-wheels are made in Tumsar and exported to all the surrounding Districts. They are of two kinds known as *nao kā chāk* and *bhudle kā chāk*. The former have no iron round the hub and cost from Rs. 12 to Rs. 25 a pair, while *bhudle* wheels cost from Rs. 20 to Rs. 50. The hub is of *babūl* or *anjan* (*Hardwickia binata*) and all the rest of the wheel of teak. Lac bangles are made in Lākhni (the lac village) in Sākoli tahsīl, but not in large quantities. The Gonds of Sendurwāfa, Gond-Umrī and Chikhlī make soft matting of *sukhwāsa* grass (*Saccharum ciliare*), which is

used for sitting and sleeping on. It sells for 2 annas a piece of 3 by 5 feet. Bamboo matting is made in a number of villages and sold at 4 annas a piece of 5 by 5 feet. Native cigarettes or *bīris* are now made in large quantities in Tirorā. The tobacco is brought from Madras and Assam, and the leaves of the *tendū* tree (*Diospyros tomentosa*) are used as coverings for the cigarettes. About 1000 persons, men, women and children, are engaged in the industry. The wages paid are 11 pice for rolling 1000 cigarettes and a man can earn 3 to 5 annas a day. The cigarettes are sold for 10 annas a thousand or less, and are exported to Nāgpur, Berār and other Districts. The sales are said to amount to Rs. 3000 a month.

Factories.

116. Two cotton ginning factories have been erected, both in Bhandāra city. One is owned by Gangādhar Rao Chitnavīs and the other by a Pārsī. They contain together 52 gins and can dispose of 360 maunds of seed cotton a day. The charges made are about Rs. 3-8 for ginning a *bojhā* or bale of 336 lbs.

Weights and measures.

117. The measures ordinarily used for grain are—

One *chitack*	=	$6\frac{1}{4}$ tolās.
One *ser*	=	4 *chitacks* or 25 tolās.
One *adhelī*	=	2 *sers*.
One *pailī*	=	4 *sers* or 100 tolās or $2\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.
One *kātha*	=	4 *pailīs* or 10 lbs.
One *kuro*	=	8 *pailīs* or 20 lbs.
One *khandī*	=	20 *kuros* or 5 maunds.

The above are grain measures. In weighing goods the Government seer of 80 tolās is usually employed. Chillies and vegetables are sold by the *paserī* of 120 tolās. The maund of *gur* contains $13\frac{1}{2}$ seers, and of sugar and *ghī* $12\frac{1}{2}$ seers. Brass vessels are weighed by a maund of 14 seers 10 chitacks. A *khandī* of seed area is $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres, being roughly the extent of land for which a *khandī* of unhusked rice will provide seed. Earthwork in fields and tanks is measured

by the *pāsori* or pit of 5 cubits square by one cubit in depth from which the earth is removed. This is equivalent to 84 cubic feet of earth dug. Tank-making is paid for by contract at the rate of a rupee for 5 *pāsoris* or 420 cubic feet, while in the case of field embankments a rupee is paid for 6 or 8 *pāsoris* as the lead is less.

The Saka Calendar.

118. In the Marāthā Districts the Saka era and calendar are used. This era commenced in 78 A.D. and is believed to have been founded by a Scythian King Sālivāhan, of the Yueh-chi tribe, who reigned in Kāthiāwār. The year 1905 was 1826-27 of the Saka era. The Saka calendar differs from the Vikrama calendar in common use in the Central Provinces, in the fact that each month begins a fortnight later. Thus Chaitra, the first day of which month begins the new year, corresponds to the second half of the Vikrama Chait and the first half of Baisākh. The Saka months begin with the new moon and the Vikrama months with the full moon. The 1st of Chaitra may fall as early as the middle of March, but more commonly comes in the last week of March or the first week of April. Consequently Chaitra may be taken roughly as corresponding to April. The names of the Saka months are practically the same as those of the Vikrama months, but they retain the correct Sanskrit forms, whereas the Vikrama names are Hindī corruptions. But the Vikrama month Kunwār is called Ashvin in the Saka calendar and the month Aghan is called Mārgashīr. Both eras are luni-solar and the year consists of about 355 days, but is made to correspond very nearly with the Gregorian year by the interposition of triennial intercalary months.

Markets.

119. There are over a hundred weekly markets in the District or one for every 40 square miles and 18 villages. Amgaon is a very important cattle-market, at which a large number of head of buffaloes are sold, and many worn-out animals are disposed of to the butchers. In 1904, 35,000 head were sold at Am-

gaon, of which 16,000 were cows and 10,000 male buffaloes. The income from registration fees was Rs. 5000. Lakhāndur and Kitāri in Sākoli tahsīl are also important cattle-markets, and a few animals are brought to several of the larger village bazars. Gondia and Kānti on the Sātpurā railway are the largest markets in Tirorā tahsīl; Tumsar, Mohāli and Bhandāra in the Bhandāra tahsīl; and Lakhāndur, Kitāri, Pohrā and Lākhni in Sākoli tahsīl. Lakhāndur is an important timber market, as is Mūndhri in Tirorā. The best rice is sold at Tirorā bazar. Mohāli is a large cloth-market.

Fairs.

120. No fairs of commercial importance are held in the District, but there are a number of religious gatherings, at some of which temporary shops are opened for the sale of vessels and provisions. The most important of these is the Gaimukh fair near Ambāgarh which takes place at the Shivrātri festival in February or March and lasts for about 15 days. The attendance is about 20,000 persons and about 100 temporary shops are opened. A fair is also held on the Shivrātri festival at Partābgarh in Sākoli tahsīl, but the attendance here is smaller. Small religious gatherings are also held at Bondgaon in the Sākoli tahsīl and at Suklī in the Tirorā tahsīl on the last day of Chaitra (April). Some temporary shops are opened at Bondgaon. The fair at Suklī is a gathering of the religious order of the Mānbhaos. A small religious gathering is also held at Pongejharā near Asolpāni on the day of Shivrātri. In the Waingangā between the villages of Deohāda and Madgī, and visible from the railway bridge, there is an island and on it a temple of Narsingh. A religious fair is held here on the last day of Kārtik (November).

TRADE.

Trade in past years.

121. Mr. Lawrence stated that the principal trading towns in the District at the time of the 30 years' settlement (1867) were Bhandāra, Tumsar and Paunī. The trade of the District

was described as follows[1]:—'Commerce has received a 'great impetus since the annexation of Bhandāra with the 'rest of the Province of Nāgpur by the British Government. 'The vastly improved condition now of the Great Eastern 'Road and of the District communications, an enlightened 'administration, and a well-ordered police, have greatly 'facilitated traffic. The extinction of the Bhonsla rule has, 'however, diminished the demand for the superior descrip-'tion of the Paunī cloth; and the rise in the price of grain, 'together with the simultaneous rise in the price of cotton, 'has reduced the sale also of the inferior kinds of cloth; but 'the export of the cloth from this town is still great, having 'last year amounted to Rs. 50,372. The chief articles im-'ported are cotton, salt, wheat, rice, oilseeds, metal and 'hardware, English piece-goods, tobacco, silk, dyes and cattle; 'and the articles most extensively exported are country 'cloth, tobacco and hardware. The direction of the trade is 'chiefly to and from Nāgpur and Raipur by the Great 'Eastern Road, and by another route through Palāndur. 'Also to and from Kamptee by the Tumsar route, and 'towards Mandlā by Hattā and Kāmtha. Of the articles 'imported, salt is brought from Berār and the Eastern 'Coast; sugar, metals and spices from Mirzāpur; hard-'ware from Mirzāpur and Mandlā; European cloth and 'silks from Mirzāpur and Bombay; country silks from 'Burhānpur; red country cloth from Mhow and Rānī-'pur in the Jhānsi District; wheat and rice from Raipur; 'and cattle from the Seonī and Mandlā Districts. Of the 'articles exported, country cloth is sent from Paunī, Andhār-'gaon, Mohāri, Bhandāra and Bhāgri, to Nāgpur, Poona 'and Bombay; and hardware from Bhandāra and Paunī, 'to Nāgpur, Raipur and Jubbulpore. Articles of traffic are 'generally conveyed in small country carts and on pack-'bullocks.'

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[1] C. P. Gazetteer, 1868, page 46.

122. Mr. Napier writing in 1895 remarked on trade[1] :—

Statistics of rail-borne trade.

'The Nāgpur-Chhattīsgarh railway 'was opened in 1880 and in 1888 the 'Bengal-Nāgpur railway, but owing 'to the proximity of Bhandāra to Nāgpur by far the larger 'amount of traffic goes by road as before. The largest 'wheat-growing tract is Paunī Chauras and from there the 'distance to Nāgpur is not much greater than that to the 'railway. For a large part of the year the cultivator has no 'use for his bullocks and it therefore pays him to take his 'produce straight to the Nāgpur market. The figures of 'the rail-borne traffic of the District therefore lose much of 'their interest. The imports of salt into the District have 'increased during the last ten years (1885—95) by 27,000 'maunds, but the imports of cotton goods have remained 'nearly stationary since 1885. The main commerce of the 'District appears to follow the old trade-routes, namely, the 'the Paunī-Nāgpur road and the Great Eastern Road, while 'to some extent it passes from the Ambīgarh pargana to 'Rāmtek. A certain amount of produce is also carried to 'Bhandāra along the Bhandāra-Adyāl-Paunī route.' It follows that the statements of rail-borne traffic do not accurately represent the commerce of the District. On the other hand, the exports from Gondia include a large proportion of the produce of the Bālāghāt District and those from Tumsar also to a smaller extent. Little absolute value can therefore be assigned to the traffic statistics, but for purposes of comparison in future the statistics of the years 1903—05 are given on the next page.

Exports.

123. As these figures do not represent the trade of Bhandāra, it is unnecessary to comment on them in detail. The expansion of the export trade in the last two years is remarkable, even allowing for the fact that 1903 was a year of scarcity. Rice is the staple export and is sent from Gondia, Tumsar and Tirorā

[1]Settlement Annexures, Vol. I, page 6.

Comparative statement of Exports by Rail from the Bhandāra District for 1903, 1904, and 1905.

In thousands.

	1903.		1904.		1905.	
	Maunds.	Rupees.	Maunds.	Rupees.	Maunds.	Rupees.
1. Raw cotton ...	...	...	...	...	2	32
2. Dyes	40	1,06	39	71	40	2,29
3. Rice	264	8,92	592	21,46	557	20,52
4. Other grains and pulse.	164	3,98	227	5,49	403	10,52
5. Hides and skins, raw	9	1,96	6	1,86	7	1,98
6. Lac ...	8	2,18	10	3,44	14	5,32
7. Manganese ...	228	28	273	34	641	80
8. Oilseeds... ...	33	1,15	66	1,96	115	3,58
9. Timber	112	2,42	138	3,07	134	3,01
10. Bamboos ...	165	5,75	192	6,72	204	7,13
11. Mahuā flowers ...	118	4,13	105	3,67	125	4,38
12. Other articles ...	112	13,15	117	10,68	137	15,16
13. All other articles, value not known.	...	...	47	value unknown	39	value not known.
Total ...	1,253	44,98	1,812	59,40	2,418	75,01

Comparative statement of Imports by Rail into the Bhandāra District for three years, *i.e.*, 1903, 1904 and 1905.

In thousands.

	1903.		1904.		1905.	
	Maunds.	Rupees.	Maunds.	Rupees.	Maunds	Rupees.
1. Cotton manufactures	41	14,58	37	13,76	40	16,74
2. Grains and pulses ...	424	10,35	100	2,91	86	2,59
3. Gunny bags ...	7	61	14	1,32	18	1,88
4. Metals	22	2,96	78	2,55	30	3,76
5. Kerosine oil ...	36	1,70	36	1,66	35	1,57
6. Oilseeds... ...	37	84	29	70	37	82
7. Provisions ...	18	1,48	18	1,40	21	1,80
8. Salt	127	4,25	113	3,67	111	3,11
9. Spices	15	1,64	20	2,27	18	2,55
10. Sugar	23	2,11	21	2,17	23	2,34
11. Tobacco	8	70	9	1,29	7	1,32
12. Dyes	6	49	25	82	16	1,17
13. Other articles ...	38	6,19	70	4,76	71	8,61
14. All other articles, value unknown.	...	...	56	not known.	58	not known.
Total ...	802	47,90	626	39,28	571	48,26

stations to Nāgpur, Berār, Khāndesh and Bombay. The pulse urad probably comes second in importance among exports of grain, and wheat and gram are also sent out, the wheat grown in the Paunī Chauras being generally taken to Nāgpur by road. The figures for timber are probably quite unrepresentative of the real exports as teak, *biulā* (*Pterocarpus Marsupium*), and bamboos are sent from the Sākoli tahsīl to Nāgpur by road. From the eastern zamīndāris considerable quantities of timber are put on to the railway at Sālekasā and Darekasā stations. Mahuā flowers are now an important article of trade, the exports amounting to more than Rs. 4 lakhs in 1905. A trade has also arisen in mahuā nuts, which are locally known as *todī*. The oil from these nuts was formerly expressed locally and used as a substitute for or in adulteration of *ghī*; but a good price is now obtained for export. The trade in lac is growing rapidly, the exports having increased from 8000 maunds valued at Rs. 2·18 lakhs in 1903 to 14,000 valued at Rs. 5·32 lakhs in 1905. The exports of manganese increased from 8361 to 23,539 tons during this period. Among minor articles *singhāra* or water-nuts (*Trapa bispinosa*) and mangoes are sent to Nāgpur and Kamptee and also ginger, oranges and plantains in small quantities. The leaf cigarettes made at Tirorā go to all the surrounding Districts. Cart-wheels from Tumsar are sent to Nāgpur and Berār. Silk-bordered cloths are sent to Berār and the Bombay Presidency. A regular trade has grown up in fish, eggs and fowls which are despatched daily to the Nāgpur market, and this has had the effect of considerably increasing the cost of living in Bhandāra.

Imports.

124. The principal imports are cotton yarn and piece-goods, salt, kerosine oil, sugar and metals. It is noticeable that between 1903 and 1905 the imports of European cotton manufactures increased from Rs. 3 to Rs. 8 lakhs, while those of Indian manufacture declined from Rs. 11 to Rs. 8½ lakhs. Indian yarn is obtained from the Nāgpur and Hinganghāt mills and

cloth from Nāgpur. Sea-salt from Thāna District in Bombay is generally used. Foreign sugar has hitherto been principally consumed, but Indian sugar, called Mirzāpuri, is now used on account of the prejudice against the employment of bone-dust charcoal in refining Mauritius sugar. Juār and arhar are imported from Berār. Some 10,000 maunds of chillies are obtained annually from Guntur in Madras. Betel-vine comes from Rāmtek. Gondia and Tumsar are the two most important stations for trade, Gondia having about 40 per cent. of the total both of exports and imports. The greater proportion of this however probably belongs to the Bālāghāt District. Tumsar has about 30 per cent. of the export trade and 27 per cent. of the imports, but here again the figures include the trade of the Katangī and Wārāseonī tracts of Bālāghāt. The third station for exports is Darekasā, owing to the bulk of its timber exports, while in respect of imports Bhandāra comes third. The statistics of the five principal stations in maunds were as follows in 1905 :—Exports—Gondia 960,000, Tumsar 886,000, Darekasā 218,000, Tirorā 106,000, Sālekasā 92,000; Imports – Gondia 225,000, Tumsar 161,000, Bhandāra 96,000, Tirorā 52,000, Amgaon 22,000. It is impossible to estimate what proportion of the total trade is carried to Nāgpur by road.

COMMUNICATIONS.

Railways.

125. Mr. Napier wrote as follows on the communications of the District in 1902 :—‘ When Mr. ‘ Lawrence concluded his settlement ‘ there was no railway in the District, though the line ‘ between Bombay and Nāgpur was just being completed, and ‘ there was only one road, properly so called, the Great ‘ Eastern Road, and even this was only bridged and metalled ‘ for 30 miles eastward of Bhandāra. Now the railway ‘ extends right through the northern part of the District to ‘ Calcutta, and several metalled roads have been opened. In ‘ the north two roads connect the Bālāghāt District with the

'town of Tumsar and the railway, a third joins Bālāghāt with 'the rail at Gondia, while a fourth was recently made to the 'station of Amgaon. The Sākoli tahsīl has been joined to 'the railway by a road from Saongī to Gondia, but the trade 'of the south of the tahsīl is still carried to Bhandāra and 'often into Nāgpur by the Great Eastern Road. The main 'arteries of traffic are served by a network of tracks open 'for eight months in the year. The most important of 'the subsidiary trade routes are those from the market 'of Chīchgarh-Palāndur *viâ* Sāngarhī to Lākhni on the 'Great Eastern Road and from the market of Lakhāndur 'to the same place. The timber traffic along these roads is 'immense.'

The main line of the Bengal-Nāgpur railway runs through the north of the District with a length of 78 miles within its limits and the stations of Bhandāra Road, Kokā, Tumsar Road, Tirorā, Gangājharī, Gondia, Gudmā, Amgaon, Sālekasā and Darekasā. The line was originally constructed on the metre gauge to Rāj-Nāndgaon and opened in 1882, and was reconstructed on the broad gauge and extended to Asansol in 1888. The narrow-gauge Sātpurā branch from Gondia to Jubbulpore has a length of 11 miles and two stations, Gondia and Birsolā, in the District. This was opened to traffic as far as Neinpur in 1903. Another narrow-gauge branch from Gondia to Brahmapuri and Chānda through Nawegaon Bandh was under construction in 1907. This runs for a length of 78 miles in the District with the stations of Ghotī, Pāndhri, Sondur, Wāngi, Nawegaon, Nīmgaon, Chicholī, and Rājni. It crosses the Chūlband and Waingangā rivers. A branch will also probably be constructed from Paunī to Nāgpur. Another line has been surveyed from Tumsar Road to Katangī and Bālāghāt. The Central India Mining Company have built a tramway for 23 miles from Tumsar Road to Bondkatā on the Bāwantharī river and it is to be extended to Suklī and Kosamba.

Roads.

126. The principal road is the Great Eastern Road, running from Nāgpur through Pārdi, Mohdā, Bhandāra, Lākhni, Sākoli, Arjunī and Deorī. It is metalled for 72 miles from Nāgpur to Arjunī, of which 40 are within the Bhandāra District. The remaining 20 miles from Arjunī to the border have only a surface coating of gravel. This road is a very important route for traffic. Timber from the Chānda zamīndāri forests and from Chīchgarh is brought to Lakhāndur market or through Sāngarhī and from there on to the road at Lākhni or Sākoli. Many tenants take grain in their own carts direct to Nāgpur, where better prices are obtained than at Bhandāra, and bring back arhar, cloth and other articles to their villages. The road crosses the Waingangā about a mile and a half from Bhandāra and a temporary bridge is constructed over the river in the open season. The Gondia-Bālāghāt road, which runs for 12 miles in the District crossing the Bāgh river at the border, was until recently a principal trade route, but the Sātpurā railway will now probably take most of the traffic hitherto carried by it. The Tumsar-Rāmpailī and Tumsar-Katangī roads are also important, the produce of the lowlands of Bālāghāt and the north of Bhandāra being carried along them to the large market of Tumsar. The Rāmpailī road is metalled for 27 miles to that village and is then continued as a gravelled road to Wārāseonī in Bālāghāt, another 5 miles. From Khairlānjī, 22 miles from Tumsar, a gravelled road runs to Tirorā station. The Tumsar-Katangi road running for 25 miles in the District is also metalled, and now carries manganese from the Chāndpur mines. Other metalled roads are those from Gondia to Arjunī on the Great Eastern Road, from Amgaon south to Sātgaon (8 miles), and from Amgaon to the border towards Lānji (2 miles), and the links connecting Bhandāra, Tumsar and Amgaon with their respective railway stations. The Amgaon-Lānji road carries some traffic. The Mūl-Umrer road runs for 6 miles through the south-western corner of the District. At Bhīwā-

pur a gravelled road takes off to Paunī (7 miles). Of gravelled roads the principal is that from Bhandāra to Adyāl and Pauni (29 miles) taking off from the Great Eastern Road at Kardhā on the further bank of the Waingangā. This is an important feeder, bringing produce from the south of the Bhandāra tahsīl on to the Great Eastern Road. Other short links connect the large village of Mohāli with Tumsar (7 miles) and Bhandāra Road station (6 miles). The total length of metalled roads in the District is 166 miles and of unmetalled 70 miles. These represent a total outlay on construction of Rs. 11½ lakhs. The annual expenditure on maintenance is Rs. 65,000, being at the rate of about Rs. 300 a mile for metalled roads. All the roads are managed by the Public Works Department except the Great Eastern Road from Arjunī to the border and the small link from Tirorā to the railway station, which are in charge of the District Council. A number of new roads are projected, among them being routes to connect the important market of Lakhāndur with Sāngarhī, Mohgaon and Pauni; roads from Nawegaon Bandh which will be a station on the Gondia-Brahmapurī line to Lākhni and Chīchgarh; a railway feeder from Rāmpailī to Birsolā station; an extension of the Amgaon-Sātgaon road to Deori on the Great Eastern Road; and roads from Palāndur to Rajolī and from Sākoli to Sāngarhī.

Carts.

127. Carts for transport are known as *bandī* or *gāra*. The *bandī* works on made roads and has large wheels and a rim three fingers broad. It can carry a maximum load of 30 maunds. The *gāra* has small wheels with narrow tyres and is used on country roads, the wheels fitting into the ruts which are always worn into the surface of these. The *bandī* or large cart is liable to upset on the village tracks. A *gāra* will carry a maximum load of 20 maunds. The frame of a cart is often made of *tinsā* wood and the wheels of teak, the hubs being of *babūl*, a very hard wood. Buffaloes are frequently used for heavy loads as the cattle of the District are small

and weak. Small travelling carts are called *chhakrā* or *rengī*. A *rengī* will carry five or six persons, but a *chhakrā* at most two. Ponies are often used in these small carts as the bullocks will not trot well. A *gāra* costs about Rs. 30 and a *bandī* which is not so strongly built Rs. 25, while a *rengī* may be anything from ten to forty rupees according to the degree of finish and ornament required. In 1905-06 the District had 88,584 carts, or more than any other in the Province. There was more than one cart to each tenant.

River traffic.

128. During the monsoon season there is a certain amount of traffic on the Waingangā. Bamboos from the Bālāghāt District are floated down the Bāgh and Waingangā rivers and grain is sometimes taken into the north of the Chānda District. Vegetables are brought from Paunī to Bhandāra.

CHAPTER VI.

FORESTS AND MINERALS.

FORESTS.

Description of forests.

129. The Government forests cover an area of 533 square miles, of which all but nine are reserved forests. They are situated principally on the Ambāgarh, Gaikhurī and Partābgarh hills and are divided into five ranges named Bāwantharī, Lākhni, Paunī, Gaikhurī and Partābgarh. The area contained in each range is shown in the margin. The Bāwantharī range comprises the forest on the Ambāgarh hills to the north of the railway. The Lākhni range lies a few miles to the east of Bhandāra, the forest land being generally flat but broken by a few small steep hills. The Paunī range is situated in the strip cut off by the Waingangā to the south-west of the District. It consists of a partly flat, partly hilly surface covered with a poor growth of jungle. The forests of all these three ranges are situated in a comparatively dry climate. The vegetation is almost similar, consisting of low mixed forest, ill-grown and of varying density. On the hillsides and in the smaller valleys the crop as a rule is complete, while elsewhere, owing to the soil and in great measure to bad treatment in the past, it varies from a fairly high density to an absolute blank. The most common type is an open forest with the trees in groups. Though teak (*Tectona grandis*) is not altogether absent, the principal component species are *sāj* or *yen* (*Terminalia tomentosa*), *garādi* (*Lebidieropsis orbicularis*), mahuā (*Bassia latifolia*), *dhaurā* (*Anogeissus latifolia*), *lendia* (*Lagerstrœmia parviflora*), *biulā* (*Pterocarpus Marsupium*), *tendū* (*Diospyros omentosa khair* (*Acacia Catechu*), *achār* (*Buchanania latifo-*

		Sq. miles.
Bāwantharī	...	145
Lākhni	...	62
Paunī	...	40
Gaikhurī	..	145
Partābgarh	...	141

lia), *rohan* (*Soymida febrifuga*), *bhīra* (*Chloroxylon Swietenia*), *mohkā* (*Schrebera swietenioides*), and *bahāwa* (*Cassia fistula*) The other two ranges of Gaikhurī and Partābgarh are situated in a moister climate and the forest growth in them is of better quality. The Gaikhurī range lies to the east of Bhandāra between the railway and the Great Eastern Road and consists of one large central and five smaller outlying blocks. The Partābgarh forests stand on the hills to the south-east and the surface is much broken by ravines and the beds of streams. Patches of good teak forest occupy the west and north-east of the Gaikhurī range and teak is also well represented in the Nawegaon and Kelod blocks of the Partābgarh range. But the representative trees are *sāj* or *yen*, and *biulā*, and associated with them are the common species already mentioned. Bamboos are plentiful in the Gaikhurī and Partābgarh ranges; they are found but not in large quantities in the hilly tracts of the other ranges.

Forest products and income.

130. The demand on the forests is of the ordinary nature for building wood, fuel, bamboos, grass and grazing. The consumption of the produce is chiefly local, but bamboos and teak poles are taken to Kamptee from the Gaikhurī range along the Great Eastern Road. The other ranges are fairly well provided with cart tracks leading from village to village. Mahuā, *chironjī* the fruit of the *achār* tree, myrobalans, and lac are the principal minor products. Lac is grown on *palās* trees in this District and these are commoner in private than in Government forests. The propagation of the lac insect was however conducted departmentally in 1905-06 in all ranges. The cultivation of tasar silk cocoons is also being encouraged, principally in the Paunī range where the local Dhīmars combine this operation with that of growing *singhāra* or water-nut. The cocoons are grown on the *sāj* tree and about 1200 acres of forest have been assigned to the Dhīmars for this purpose. *Tīkhur*, the tuber of *Curcuma angustifolia*, is another minor product. It is eaten like arrow-root,

boiled with milk. The following statement shows the revenue from the various products in different years :—

Year.		Timber.	Fuel.	Grass and grazing.	Bamboos.	Minor products.
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1881-82	...	1,000	13,000	21,000	2,000	1,000
1891-92	...	7,000	12,000	24,000	9,000	6,000
1902-03	...	7,000	10,000	10,000	7,000	2,000
1903-04	...	9,000	12,000	12,000	7,000	3,000
1904-05	...	9,000	14,000	13,000	7,000	4,000
1905-06	...	13,000	16,000	18,000	7,000	4,000

The number of animals annually entering the forests for grazing has varied between 60,000 and 80,000 in recent years, and the annual receipts are from Rs. 8000 to Rs. 12,000. In 1905-06 an area of 102 square miles was closed to grazing and 371 square miles were closed to browsers.

Statistics of revenue and management.

131. The following statement shows the income, expenditure and surplus derived from the management of the forests :—

Year.			Revenue.	Expenditure.	Surplus.
			Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1881-82	...	...	45,000	13,000	32,000
1891-92	...	...	60,000	33,000	27,000
1901-02	...	...	38,000	28,000	10,000
1903-04	...	...	45,000	34,000	11,000
1904-05	...	...	50,000	35,000	15,000
1905-06	...	...	62,000	32,000	30,000

In 1905-06 the staff consisted of a Divisional Forest Officer, three Rangers, three Deputy Rangers, seven foresters, and 67 permanent and 10 temporary forest guards. Owing to the fact that the Divisional Officer is usually a member of the Provincial service, the expenses of management are lower than in other Districts and the surplus has thereby been increased. Up to 1893 the forests were under no sort of organised management, but were worked under the license system, the license-holder being permitted to remove the produce he had paid for from any part of the forests without let or hindrance. Subsequently to that year working plans for each range were drawn up, the working circles being divided into thirty coupes to be cut over in annual rotation. The method of 'improvement fellings' of varying intensity to suit local conditions has been adopted. Working plans exist for an area of 454 square miles and have been abandoned in the case of 79 square miles of forest. Of the total area 428 square miles are afforded fire protection, 198 square miles being under A class protection at a cost of Rs. 15-12 per square mile, and 230 square miles under B class protection at R 1-8 per square mile.

Private forests.

132. Besides the Government forests, the District contains 1324 square miles of private forests, of which 579 belong to mālguzārs and 745 to zamīndārs. Including these the total area of forest and scrub jungle is 1857 square miles or 47 per cent. of that of the District. The private forests are extensive and valuable, being situated principally in the north-east and south-east Teak is not plentiful, but a fair quantity is found in a number of villages south-east of Bhandāra and a few near Nawegaon, and also in the zamīndāri forests round Sālekasā and Darekasā in the north-east. *Sāj*, *biulā* and the other common species make up the bulk of the forests. The owners usually issue passes to the cultivators of their own and other villages for felling timber on payment of a fixed duty. The license-holders proceed to the forest

and, felling and squaring the trees and poles which they are entitled to remove, carry them to the timber markets as Mūndhri in the Tirorā tahsīl and Lakhāndur and Kasāri in Sākoli tahsīl. Here the produce is sold either to local consumers or to middlemen for transport to Nāgpur or Berār. When field work is slack a large number of cultivators engage in the trade in timber and bamboos and often earn enough in a season to enable them to purchase a new pair of bullocks. The annual income obtained by the owners may be estimated at Rs. 40 per square mile from scrub jungle and Rs. 80 from tree forest, giving a total of nearly a lakh annually for the private forest area. No sort of system is observed in exploiting the private forests and it must be inevitably concluded that their value is steadily decreasing. A fresh source of income has recently arisen in the cultivation of lac, for which there is now a large demand. It is grown on *palās* trees, and propagated by cutting off a branch encrusted with the insect and tying it to another tree covered with a little grass to keep off the heat of the sun. This is done twice a year in February and June, and the crop is obtained six months afterwards. The stick lac is stated to fetch at present a rupee a seer and many ordinary mālguzārs derive incomes of one or two thousand rupees a year from this source. The cutting of *palās* trees has come to be prohibited, and their plantation is sometimes undertaken, while *māhul* and *san*-hemp are substituted for *palās* fibre in binding roof-poles and ploughs.

Rights in zamīndāri forests.

133. At the 30 years' settlement zamīndāri forest areas were divided into *fāzil* and *dochand*. The latter were so called because each village had included in it an area of waste equal to twice the amount of cultivated land that it contained. In mālguzāri areas the remaining forest was declared Government waste; but in zamīndāris it was called *fāzil* jungle and formed into separate *mahāls* or revenue-paying units, which were settled with the zamīndār

and assessed every three years until the last settlement, when they were settled for the same period as the remainder of the District. The inhabitants of zamīndāri villages have a right to *nistār* or produce for their own uses from the *dochand* jungle; but if they wish to use the *fāzil* jungle they have to pay *rānwa* or forest dues.

Roadside arboriculture.

134. Out of a total length of 142 miles under the Public Works Department, roadside avenues exist on 53 miles, out of which 29 miles are under maintenance. A length of 11 miles does not require avenues as the roads pass through forest, and the remaining 78 miles have to be provided with avenues. The longest avenue is on the Great Eastern Road, which has 24 miles planted, and the only others of importance are on the Bhandāra Circuit road and the road leading from Bhandāra to the railway station and on to Mohāli. In 1904 the expenditure on arboriculture was nearly Rs. 1700, but only Rs. 200 were spent on planting new trees and all the remainder on maintenance. A sum of Rs. 130 was obtained from the produce of the trees. The District Council have only 3½ miles of avenues on the roads under their charge, on the Dhāba-Bothlī road for 3 miles, and for half a mile of the Tirorā station road. The section of the Great Eastern Road which is under the Council does not require avenues as it passes through forest. The Council spends Rs. 250 on the maintenance of five nurseries. Until recently it contributed Rs. 700 for arboriculture to the Public Works Department, but this payment has now been remitted and the same sum of Rs. 700 has been fixed as the minimum amount to be expended annually by the Council on arboriculture. The trees principally planted in avenues are the mango, *nīm*, *kāranj* (*Pongamia glabra*), pīpal, *jāmun* (*Eugenia Jambolana*), *babūl*, tamarind and *chichwā* (*Acacia procera*). In 1904 the Deputy Commissioner wrote that '*Nīm* is the tree which 'grows to perfection in this District, as can be seen from the

'fine scattered specimens in the station. The *nīm* not only 'grows to a uniform height and affords ample shade during 'the hottest months of the year, but also bears a fruit, from 'the seed of which a valuable oil is extracted and used for 'medicinal and other purposes. The oil-cake is also of 'high manurial value.'

MINERALS.

Manganese deposits.

135. The following notice of the manganese industry is principally abstracted from Mr. L. Leigh Fermor's paper 'Manganese in India' (Transactions of the Mining and Geological Institute of India, Volume 1, Part 2, August 1906). Manganese ores were first found by Colonel Bloomfield in the water-courses near Ambāgarh some time previous to 1883 In 1893-94 Mr. P. N. Datta of the Geological Survey of India discovered several of the deposits enumerated below. Work was commenced on the Bhandāra deposits in 1901 and from then until 1904 there has been a small but increasing output In 1905, however, the output increased to 35,000 tons; whilst in 1906, owing to favourable prices and the construction of a light steam-tramway from Tumsar Road station to the Bāwanthari river by the Central India Mining Company, the production jumped to 98,000 tons. The deposits so far located are all situated in the north-west of the District in the Chāndpur pargana, and most of them are within 15 miles of Tumsar. The bulk of the deposits have been leased by two Companies, the Central India Mining Company and the Central Provinces Prospecting Syndicate. To the former company belong the deposits at Kosamba, Suklī, Hatorā, Miragpur, Mohgaon Ghāt, Pandarwāni, Sālebadī, Chikhlā II and Garkabhongā. The Central Provinces Prospecting Syndicate have leased the deposits at Sītāpathār, Kurmurā (Ponwārdongrī), Chikhlā I, and Sītāsaongī. The mine at Asalpāni is leased by D. Lakshmī Nārāyan. One of the largest of these deposits is Chikhlā I, where the main body of ore forms a peak over 500

feet high, called Bhāmāsur hill, and the ore-band is as wide as 80 feet, but is very much spoilt by bands of quartz and spessartite. Another large deposit is Kurmurā; it is nearly $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles long and 40 feet wide at the broadest part. The ore-bodies occur as lenticular masses and bands in the metamorphic and crystalline series and appear to have been formed, at least in part, by the chemical alteration of rocks composed of spessartite and quartz associated in very variable proportions. Many of the rocks, including the manganese-bearing varieties, of this Archæan complex, are probably extremely metamorphosed forms of the Chilpi or Dhārwār rocks of Bālāghāt.

The manganese industry.

136. The deposits in about 9 villages are being worked at present (1906). In 1905, the exports of manganese amounted to 32,000 tons and in 1906 they increased to 85,000 tons valued at Rs. 3 lakhs. The value per ton at the pit's mouth was formerly taken as Rs. 2-8 but was increased to Rs. 5 in the new mines opened in 1906. The amount of royalty paid in 1906 was Rs. 21,000 at 4 annas per ton. The average quantity of manganese per ton according to analyses obtained by the Geological Survey from a number of samples was 52 per cent. In 1906 the average price per unit or one per cent. of manganese was $13\frac{1}{2}$ pence at the ports of the United Kingdom, so that a ton of ore containing 52 per cent. of manganese would fetch 58 shillings and sixpence. The cost of transport from Tumsar Road to Bombay is estimated by the Geological Department at Rs. 8-1-4 at the rate of $\frac{1}{10}$th pie per maund per mile. Freight to Europe is from 15*s.* to 17*s.* a ton. According to local inquiry the cost of quarrying and stacking in the case of surface deposits is less than a rupee a ton, while cartage to the railway may be Rs. 5 to Rs. 8 in Bhandāra according to the distance of the mines; but where a tramway is available it is very much less and may be reduced to a matter of annas. The remaining items of expenditure are establishment, plant,

royalty, cost of handling the ore in transit, port dues, and agency and sampling charges. Allowing for these it is seen that a large margin of profit remains at present, but in 1904 when the price fell, some of the poorest and least favourably situated of the Central Provinces mines were shut down. One or two of the smaller firms sell their ore at Tumsar and the rate here in 1906 was Rs. 13-8 per ton. The wages paid locally are about Rs. 4 for quarrying and stacking 100 cubic feet. A man and woman working together earn about 5 annas a day. Several hundred carts are engaged during the mining season in carrying the ore to the railway and the cartmen earn from 12 annas to Rs. 2-8 a day. The Central India Mining Company have constructed a tramway for 23 miles from Tumsar Road station to Bondkatā on the Bāwantharī and it will be extended to Suklī, Kosamba and Miragpur.

Other minerals.

137. Iron ore is found in several places, among them being Pāngri, Alījharī and Bālāpur in Tirorā tahsīl; and Partābgarh, Umarjharī and Bhāgri in the Sākoli tahsīl.[1] A certain quantity of iron was formerly smelted by indigenous methods and the ore was of good quality. But the industry has now practically died out as the local metal cannot compete in price with imported iron. The hillock east of Marīgaon (20° 21′, 80° 20′) was discovered by Mr. P. N. Datta of the Geological Survey to yield almost pure haematite. In many villages of the District, especially in the Chāndpur and Tirorā parganas and also in Partābgarh, are to be seen heaps of slag bearing clear testimony to the industry of iron manufacture that used to flourish there formerly. Gold is washed for in the Sonjhari-Dhodi, Bāgh, Chandan and Waingangā rivers by Sonjharās. They wash out the sand on wooden platters and use mercury to pick up the gold with which it forms an amalgam.[2] The amalgam is eva-

[1] A considerable part of this paragraph has kindly been furnished by Mr. P. N. Datta of the Geological Survey.

[2] From Mr. Low's Bālāghāt Gazetteer.

porated in a clay cupel called a *ghariyā* by which the mercury is got rid of and the gold left behind. The Sonjharās wander about from stream to stream, not living in villages, and during the rains make small huts of leaves, strewing the ground with sand. At Tumkhedā near Gondia, asbestos was discovered and a mining lease has recently been obtained for the deposit by a native firm at Kamptee. A steatite or soapstone quarry is worked at Kanerī in the Sāngarhi pargana of Sākoli. The stone is used for making cups and other vessels and *lingams* of Mahādeo. The quarry is leased annually by Government and fetches from Rs. 80 to Rs. 300. In 1904-05 it was estimated that 13,000 vessels and other articles were made from the stone of a total estimated value of Rs. 700. Mr. P. N. Datta also noticed a small outcrop of a thin-bedded grey steatite near Deori (20° 41', 80° 13'). Quartz, fairly abundant in the gneissic and Dhārwār areas, and quartzites, also plentiful in the Dhārwār area, are largely used for road-metalling in the District. Quartz-schist and some of the diabases would also no doubt serve as good road-metals. Flaggy sandstone, quartzite, quartzitic sandstone, quartz-schist and mica-schist are already used in places for the construction of temples and bridges. Laterite is of general use in the District for the construction of wells. The diabase of the Nishāni hills would also yield a fairly good building-stone.

CHAPTER VII.

FAMINE.

138. No records remain of the occurrence of famines prior to 1868, but inquiry showed that in 1822 and again in 1832 the people were severely distressed. In both cases failure of the harvest is said to have been caused by want of rain following on two or three bad seasons. The famine was aggravated in 1832 by an unusual number of fires, perhaps incendiary, and by the retention of stocks by merchants and traders. The Government stores having been emptied in giving seed-grain for the previous harvest were unable to lower the market. In both years the famine is said to have lasted about eight months and to have spread over the whole District. The price of grain rose to 4 or 5 seers to the rupee and it was procurable with difficulty even at that rate. It was common for parents to offer their children in exchange for a small supply of grain, and thousands were said to have perished from want. The measures taken by the Marāthā Government were the establishment of relief-houses at central points and the gratuitous distribution of cooked food and grain; the forced sale of private stocks at fixed rates; the offer of inducements and rewards to Banjārās and other carriers for the import of grain from Berār and Chhattīsgarh; and the remission of revenue and Government loans in the case of the most needy, with a system of payment by instalments for those who were not so hardly pressed.

Early famines.

139. In 1868 the open season from January to May was broken by an unusual amount of cloudy and rainy weather. The monsoon was favourable till the middle of August, when it suddenly ceased, and subsequently only two inches of rain were received in September and some slight showers when the spring crops

The famine of 1869.

were in flower. The bulk of the rice harvest perished and the spring crops were poor, while the yield of the mahuā flower was 50 per cent. below the average. Wheat and rice sold at 9 and 10 seers in November 1868. Work was started on the Great Eastern Road and the repair of the Sāgar tank at Bhandāra, and in May four poor-houses were opened, and subsequently increased to eight. It is reported that 76,000 persons were fed at relief-houses, but this apparently indicated the total number fed throughout the period. Many landowners also distributed cooked food from their private funds. Grain was imported by boat along the Waingangā during the rains and this tended to keep down prices at the most difficult time of the year. It was estimated that about 400 persons perished from direct starvation. The rice crop of 1869 was a bumper one and distress ceased at the harvest.

Scarcity in 1878 and 1886.

140. In 1878 the light rice failed from want of rain in October and close and cloudy weather in December and January injured the spring crops. Prices were high and there was some distress among the poorer classes. But a sufficiency of work was available, and many people made a good living by selling bundles of grass to the cartmen on the Great Eastern Road, the traffic on which was so heavy at this period that Rs. 900 were collected in tolls in one week at the Sondar bridge. In 1886 only 6 inches of rain were received in August and much anxiety was felt for the harvest, but a fall of more than 10 inches in September and October saved a considerable part of the crop, and only slight stringency was experienced.

The seasons from 1892.

141. A succession of poor harvests commenced from 1892. In that year the rain of September and October was more than 20 inches in Bhandāra and the light rice was swamped, while even the transplanted crop did not give a full outturn. Further heavy showers in the winter months injured the spring

crops. The season of 1893-94 was very similar to the preceding one and both the rice and the spring crops were again poor, while the harvest of juār was less than half the normal. In 1894-95, though the rain of September to November was only 13½ inches, it is stated that the ripening rice crop was beaten down and swamped, and where the early rice had been harvested its quality deteriorated owing to the damp weather. Owing to the saturated condition of the ground the spring grains which are largely sown as second crops in the rice fields gave a very poor outturn and the combined harvest was only 58 per cent. of normal. The monsoon of 1895 began early and continued with seasonable breaks till the beginning of September, when it abruptly terminated, and with the exception of slight showers in October drought prevailed for the remainder of the year. Rice gave only about a half outturn and the spring crops were still worse. Some distress was felt by the poorer classes in this year, the birth-rate declining to 32 per mille and the death-ratė rising to 36.

The famine of 1897.

142. In 1896 the monsoon was very heavy up to the latter part of August, 33 inches being received in that month alone. It then failed and September and October were practically rainless. The outturn of rice was only 45 per cent. of normal and juār was the same. The spring crops could not be sown over a large area owing to the dryness of the ground, though a good shower in November greatly benefited the fields in which germination had been successful. Both in this and the preceding year however, owing to the heavy rain of July and August, the tanks were filled and the irrigated area was almost a maximum, the failure being thus substantially mitigated. The District would not have experienced a regular famine but for the cumulative effect of the bad harvests of previous years. The net cropped area declined from 898,000 acres in 1893-94 to 799,000 in 1896-97. A regular system of famine relief was initiated, labour being principally employed on roads under the Public Works Department.

New roads were made from Arjunī to Gondia and from Amgaon to Sātgaon. A large number of loans were given to mālguzārs for the construction and improvement of tanks, Rs. 2·12 lakhs being distributed in special famine loans. It was stated that in June some kind of work was in progress in 499 villages. Village relief and children's kitchens only came into prominence in the later stages of the famine. Relief was given from November 1896 to December 1897, and the largest number in receipt of assistance was 43,000 persons or 6 per cent. of the population in June 1897. The expenditure was Rs. 10 lakhs. A sum of Rs. 33,000 was distributed in Agricultural loans and a lakh was received from the Charitable Relief Fund. Only about a sixth of the District demand for land revenue was suspended. The death-rate for the year was 61 per mille, the mortality, as in other Districts, showing a heavy increase after the breaking of the rains. The birth-rate fell to 26 per mille. The price of rice rose to 7½ seers during the worst part of the famine, the rate for the year being a little less than 9 seers.

The famine of 1900.

143. The two following seasons were on the whole favourable, though in 1898 the spring crops were again affected by the premature cessation of the rains. But in 1899 the monsoon again failed completely from July. The total fall of the year was only 26½ inches or half the average. The broadcast rice withered and transplantation could not be carried out at all. As the rain was so scanty the tanks never filled and the irrigated area fell to 45,000 acres. The rice crop was practically lost. Juār, the second autumn crop in importance, grew straight and tall, but owing to the lack of September rain its produce was most meagre and equalled a bare quarter of an average crop. The spring crops, which in this District are largely sown following the rice, failed almost completely.

Administrative measures.

144. As the fate of the harvest was doubtful from the first, the moneylenders stopped the usual *polgā* or loans for subsistence on the

security of the crop and distress began to be felt very early. The great advantage of this was that the necessity for a complete famine organisation was foreseen from the first and fully provided for. Working camps began to be opened from the 15th October, and altogether 12 were established. New roads were made from Kardhā to Paunī, from Tirorā to Khairlānji and from Mohāli to Tumsar, and the embankment of the Gondia-Jubbulpore railway was constructed by famine labour. The other camps were generally employed on metal-breaking. A large number of tanks were improved or repaired by means of grants to village proprietors, the amount given in this manner being Rs. 1·08 lakhs for 166 works. On these earthwork was paid for by contract at the usual rate of five *pāsoris* or 420 cubic feet to the rupee. New tanks were constructed at Amgaon and Dongrī under the supervision of the Public Works Department. Grass-cutting was also undertaken in order to afford a supply of fodder, in the event of scarcity and about 7000 tons of grass were cut at the rate of Rs. 3-11 per ton. Relief in return for work in villages was given to able-bodied persons in the rains, and they were employed on transplantation and weeding and on the improvement of village sites and roads. Advances were made to indigent weavers to the extent of about Rs. 1000 and cloth to the value of Rs. 5000 was purchased from them. There were no poor-houses, but pauper wards were attached to the dispensaries. The distribution of cooked food at kitchens was a leading feature of the system of relief. Kitchens were opened at the commencement of the operations, at which food was given to anybody who applied for it. As the relief works were organised able-bodied paupers were sent on to them until the rains, when kitchen relief was again afforded to all comers. In August 1900, 256 kitchens were open and 79,000 adults and children were receiving food. The system of cash doles was proportionately less prominent, but 24,000 persons were in receipt of them in July 1900. A substantial proportion of these were the relatives of *kotwārs* or village watchmen.

145. Relief measures lasted from September 1899 to November 1900, and the highest number of persons in receipt of assistance was 140,000 or nearly 19 per cent. of the population in July 1900. In March the numbers were 127,000, and they declined steadily after July. The expenditure was Rs. 26 lakhs. About 1½ lakhs were distributed in charitable grants and 4 lakhs in loans and more than four-fifths of the revenue demand was suspended. Agricultural loans were given out on the joint security of all the cultivators and this system was found to be very successful. During the early part of the famine the mortality was not severe, but it rose largely in the rains from 4 per mille in May to 7 in June, 8 in July and between 7 and 8 per mille per month in August, September and October. These figures afford a good justification for the liberal policy adopted during the rains, without which they must probably have been even higher. The death-rate for the year was 62 and the birth-rate 28 per mille. The price of rice reached 7½ seers in October 1899, but after this it fell and was never so high again. The average rate for 1900 was 9½ seers.

Statistics of expenditure.

146. Even now the misfortunes of the District were by no means ended. The monsoon of 1900 was not established till July, and it stopped with a cyclonic storm at the end of September. Some of the early rice was swamped and the heavier varieties were affected by the want of rain in October. The outturn of the harvests was returned as only 26 per cent. of normal, but it must apparently have been underestimated, as there was no distress. About half the land revenue was again suspended, and the bulk of the outstanding balance remitted. In the following year the autumn crops were fairly good, but the late rains were very defective and the spring harvest, largely sown as a second crop, was poor. The cultivating classes remained in a very depressed condition, but labourers were able to command good wages

The years 1901-1902.

owing to railway construction and the inception of the mining industry.

147. The chief features of the monsoon of 1902 were its lateness in arrival, its weakness in August and its early withdrawal. The rainfall of the year was only 29 inches. In the country round Gondia and the Chāndpur pargana the rice crop failed as completely as in 1899, and over the whole District the crop did not exceed 2 annas. The winter rains were again scanty and the spring harvest was a poor one, the outturn for the year being only 30 per cent. of normal. It was anticipated that relief would be necessary, but the facts that the failure was only local and that an effective demand for labour existed in Berār, combined with the employment afforded locally by the mines and the railway, prevented any real distress. The death-rate remained extremely low and prices hardly rose till the rains, when the demand for seed-grain forced them up. A liberal distribution of loans was made to the extent of $3\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs, and employment was afforded on ordinary works supplemented by a system of grants-in-aid to mālguzārs for the construction and repair of tanks. The bulk of these were completed in subsequent years under the supervision of the Irrigation Department. The generous measures adopted by Government since 1900 put heart into the people and the year passed without any serious effects. In the following year the cropped area showed a substantial increase, and in 1905-06 it had recovered to 846,000 acres as against 661,000 in 1899-00 and a maximum of 898,000 in 1893. The season of 1903-04 gave an excellent harvest, and though the two following years were less favourable the effects of the famines have now nearly passed away. The above recital of the successive failures of the rice crop, generally on account of insufficient or badly distributed rainfall especially in the autumn months, sufficiently demonstrates the wisdom of the irrigation policy now being vigorously pursued by Government.

The scarcity of 1903.

CHAPTER VIII.

LAND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION.

Revenue administration under the Marāthās.[1]

148. Owing to large changes in the area of the District the old figures of the revenue demand cannot usefully be compared with the present ones. Under Marāthā administration short-term settlements were the rule. The farm of a certain area was given to an official called a *māmlatdār*, generally a court favourite, who made himself responsible for the revenue. Each village had a patel or headman who acted as its representative and engaged for the revenue demand, which rose and fell according to the circumstances of the year. The demand was distributed over the fields of the village, each of which had a number representing its proportionate value. The patel had no proprietary right, but his office was generally hereditary, descending not necessarily to the eldest son, but to the most capable member of the family. The tenants also had no legal status but were seldom ejected so long as they paid their rents, more especially as the supply of land was in excess of the number of cultivators available to till it. The result of the system was however, that the *māmlatdārs*, who were usually Marāthā Brāhmans, managed to get a large number of villages into their own hands and those of their relations, and when proprietary rights were conferred by the British Government they thus became hereditary land-owners. The village establishment consisted of the patel, the *pāndia* and the kotwār. The *pāndia* kept the rent rolls (*lāgwans*) and was usually the village scribe. He was paid by the patel and villagers. The kotwār was, as at present, a low caste village servant exercising also certain police functions.

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[1] A detailed account of the methods of Marāthā Assessment will be found in the Wardhā, Nāgpur and Bālāghāt District Gazetteers.

Policy under British protectorate.

149. Sir R. Jenkins' policy on taking over the administration of the country was to remit a number of extra imposts that had gradually grown up round the revenue demand, and to leave only the well recognised additional dues (though even these were sufficiently numerous); to remit irrecoverable balances and to grant leases on favourable terms for breaking up waste land. A more doubtful point was whether the patels were to adhere to rates fixed by the Superintendents of Districts in letting out lands, or whether they were to be allowed a free hand. The history of the case would seem to be that Sir R. Jenkins at first allowed the Superintendents of Districts to fix the rent-rates; but he eventually decided to allow the patels to let out land as they liked without restriction. The concession, however, does not seem to have become generally known and the patels considered themselves bound to let out land at the old rates: the results being that rents remained stagnant until raised at the 30 years' settlement. A curious account is given in para. 142 of Mr Lawrence's Settlement Report of the system introduced by Captain Wilkinson, Superintendent of the Waingangā District, who appointed *tankīhdārs* from among local cultivators to watch and report on the fluctuations of the village rent-rolls. The procedure, which was intended to secure the correctness of the *lāgwans* on which the assessment was based, seems to have resulted in many abuses, and in the great enrichment of the *tankīhdārs* at the expense of the patels. During the years 1820, 1821, 1822 the revenue demand increased; from 1822 to 1830 no great enhancement was imposed. The District containing the present area of Bhandāra was then called the Waingangā District. It was subdivided into 13 parganas. By the terms of our settlements the profits arising from bringing waste lands into cultivation went to the patels; whilst on the other hand the losses accruing from fields remaining unoccupied were to be made good by them. The patel was prohibited from mak-

ing any demand over and above the amount at which each field was rented in the *lāgwan* or rent-roll, without obtaining the sanction of the pargana authorities. The allowance granted to the patels was 13 per cent. on the collections of every village yielding Rs. 800 and upwards, and 15 per cent. on those whose assessment fell short of that sum, together with an allowance varying from Rs. 15 to Rs. 25 for village expenses. Where the patel's share was in land, its value was estimated by the quantity of seed required to sow it. Sir R. Jenkins wrote of the country in 1827:—'It would 'appear from ancient records and traces of old towns, forts 'villages and tanks to be met with in the jungles, that the 'country was formerly much more populous than at the 'present day. At what period and from what causes it fell 'into the impoverished state, in which it was found by the 'Marāthās, is unknown; but in the circumstance of its being 'parcelled out at that time among a number of Gond zamin-'dārs of wild and irregular habits and constantly engaged in 'hostilities with each other, or in rebellion against their nominal 'chiefs, whether of Mandlā, Deogarh or Chānda, we perçeive 'an effectual obstacle to all improvement and a sufficient cause 'for the existence and continuance of anarchy and confusion.'

Policy under subsequent native rule.

150. After the cessation of the British protectorate in the year 1830 the same system was maintained; but, owing to the greater corruption and lessening supervision of the subordinate staff, with the result of a decrease in the revenue demand, for which, however, the great fall in prices was to some extent responsible. After the lapse of the Nāgpur kingdom in 1854, summary settlements were made on the existing rent-roll, with the result of a still further diminution of the demand.

The 30 years' settlement.

151. As a result of the careless administration of the Marāthās however, when assessment was based on the village rent-rolls drawn up by the patels themselves,

these documents were found to be utterly unreliable when the investigations were made for the 30 years' settlement. This settlement was begun in 1859 and was under the management of three different officers before Mr. A. J. Lawrence, a brother of the famous Lawrences, took charge of it in 1864. He completed it in 1867 and wrote the Report. The first step taken by the Settlement Officer was to demarcate the villages, and decide all questions of title: after which the village areas were surveyed and mapped, the soil was classed, and the *khasrā* or record of fields written up. Areas to which no one could prove a title of possession were declared Government waste and ultimately, if not included in a zamīndāri estate, became Government forest. A certain sum was assumed as the rent which an acre of cultivated soil of each class should be able to pay; this varied according to the part of the District it happened to fall in; the District being divided into *chaks* and each class of soil bearing different rates according to the advantages or disadvantages of the *chak*. This rent-rate was compared with the *lāgwans*, which were also carefully checked and revised: and the totals of the *lāgwans* were used as a means of checking the suitability of the theoretical rents. The home farm was also valued and its rental value added to the total of the *lāgwans*. The *siwai* income of the patels from forests and other sources was estimated; and on the total assets so ascertained, consisting of the theoretical rent-rates for all cultivated lands plus the *siwai* income, revenue was imposed. Besides this, an average revenue rate per plough was also calculated by counting the ploughs in each village; and a produce rate by estimating the value of the produce of each village. A comparison of the various plough rates and revenue rates, given by dividing the revenue as fixed by the number of ploughs or amount of produce, was considered to show the comparative incidence of the revenue on the cultivating resources or produce of different villages. The zamīndāris were also assessed in the same way as the *khālsa* villages, except that after fixing the *kāmil-jamā* or theoretical

revenue at mālguzāri rates, a quit-rent was fixed at a lower sum than the *kāmil-jamā;* and a triennial assessment was imposed on the *fāzil* or excess jungle, which in the *khālsa* was recorded as Government waste. The rights of all cultivators were at the same time enquired into and determined.

Results of the settlement.

152. The general result of the settlement was that the Government demand was raised 21 per cent. The revenue assessed fell at 6½ annas on the poorer land, 10¼ annas in the richest tracts and about 8½ annas on an average. The revised revenue on the present Bhandāra District was Rs 4·57 lakhs gross and Rs. 4·46 lakhs net. In spite of great opposition on the part of the ryots the rental was raised by 20 per cent. The very large enhancement of rents, which was effected at this settlement, strikingly distinguishes it from those made at the same time in the Nāgpur, Wardhā and Chhindwāra Districts. The net revenue appears to have fallen at 62 per cent. of the assets, which however included a high estimate of *siwai* income. Complaints, not well founded, were made of the severity of the assessment, and in a few villages slight reductions were sanctioned, the bulk of the applications being rejected. Subsequent experience showed, Mr. Napier says, that even these reductions were not really required. The *takolī* payable by the zamīndārs was also raised by 22 per cent., being fixed at 59 per cent. of the *kāmil-jamā.* The settlement was introduced from 1866-67.

Currency of the 30 years' settlement.

153. During the currency of the 30 years' settlement the District prospered. The Bengal-Nāgpur railway was constructed and the mileage of metalled roads rose from 35 to 248. The average rise in the prices of grain was taken at 50 per cent. at a lenient estimate. A comparison with the figures of the previous settlement showed that the occupied area had increased by 15 per cent. and the cropped area by 4 per cent. This last figure was disappointing, but the area grown with two crops increased by 16 per cent., and it is

probable that the crop statistics of the previous settlement were somewhat exaggerated.

A fresh cadastral survey was effected between the years 1889 and 1894, the operations being somewhat complicated owing to the separate mapping of all the small ricefields. The cadastral survey cost Rs. 34 and the professional traverse survey which preceded it Rs. 18 per square mile.

The settlement of 1897-98. Rental enhancement.

154. Revision of settlement was effected during the years 1894—1899 by Mr. A. B. Napier, who completed the settlement and wrote the Report. The Assistant Settlement Officers were Mr. Hasan Khān and Mr. Kutub-ud-dīn.

Of the occupied area 20 per cent. was held by mālguzārs or zamīndārs, 6 per cent. by plot-proprietors, 73 per cent. by rent-paying tenants and the remaining 1 per cent. by revenue-free grantees or privileged tenants. The proportions in which the tenant area was held in absolute occupancy, occupancy and ordinary right were 15, 39 and 46 per cent. respectively. The rate of rental of absolute occupancy tenants had risen by 4 and that of occupancy tenants by 9 per cent. during the currency of settlement. The rents of ordinary tenants had been raised by the mālguzārs by 36 per cent. The increase in the ordinary rate might have been expected to be greater in view of the rise in prices, but in the zamīndāris of the Sākoli tahsīl where there was most room for extension of cultivation rents had remained practically stationary. The increase in the tenant rate taking all classes together was 22 per cent. The statement on the next page taken from the Settlement Commissioner, Mr. Sly's, forwarding letter, shows the extent to which the rent-rate rose during the term of settlement and the enhancement imposed.

The sanctioned limit of enhancement was 50 per cent. and this was approached only in the case of ordinary tenants, whose rents had already been raised by 36 per cent. by the landlords. The further enhancement of 9 per cent. was principally accounted for by increases in the Sākoli tahsīl,

Class of tenant.	Rent-rate per acre.			Rise in rate during period of settlement.	Enhancement imposed at revision.	Total rise over rates of former settlement.
	At former settlement	Prior to revision.	After revision.			
	R. a. p.	R. a. p.	R. a. p.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
Absolute occupancy	0 13 3	0 13 9	1 0 8	4	21	26
Occupancy ...	0 12 7	0 13 8	1 0 2	9	18	28
Ordinary ...	0 9 8	0 13 1	0 14 3	36	9	47
All classes ...	0 11 1	0 13 6	0 15 4	22	14	38

where it was found that many tenants were holding on terms absurdly lenient when compared with the rates of similar and neighbouring villages, and where wide concealment of rents was suspected and in some cases proved. In about 2800 cases the Settlement Officer reduced the rental, principally of ordinary tenants. The reduction thus effected was Rs.12,000, while the total amount added to the rent-roll by revision was Rs. 1·04 lakhs. A certain amount of land held in *mālik-makbūza* right had lapsed to Government This had been leased to the mālguzārs for the period of settlement and was now settled with the cultivators as Government ryots, the mālguzārs receiving a percentage on the collections. The rental of this land was Rs. 3000. Among the *mālik-makbūzas* some enjoy a partial remission while others pay a perpetual quit-rent at the rate of a fixed proportion of the revenue assessed. As regards the concealment of rents in the Sākoli tahsīl Mr. Napier wrote[1] :—

'Large areas were found held without rent or on very 'low rents, and concealment of the true rents paid had been 'very prevalent. Of course concealment of rent could not 'always be proved; but it was clearly proved and even 'admitted in certain cases, and in others, the difference

[1] Settlement Report, para. 39

'between the rent-rate in villages held by Kohlīs as compared 'with that in those close by held by mālguzārs of other castes, 'left no doubt in one's mind that the true facts had not ap-'peared. The Kohlīs are very good landlords as a general 'rule; but in their dealings with their tenants and their 'labourers follow their own customs, while the provisions of 'the Tenancy Act often remain entirely in abeyance. They 'admit no tenant-right in land capable of being irrigated for 'sugarcane, and change the tenants as they please; and in 'many villages a large number of the labourers are practically 'serfs, being fed, clothed and married by their employers, 'for whom they and their children work all their lives 'without any fixed wages. These customs are acquiesced 'in by all parties and as far as I could learn there 'is no discontent. The announcement of the new rents 'was always received by both mālguzārs and tenants 'with perfect equanimity; but seemed to be a some-'what unreal formality, and I am not at all certain that it 'will be strictly followed In many of the zamīndāris of the 'Sākoli tahsīl there were certain dues collected in addition 'to the rent; these were called *pāndhri*, *gharkāri*, and '*sukhpattī*, and at last settlement, when elsewhere the *pān-'dhri* became a Government tax, were left untouched because 'of the inaccessibility of these tracts. It has been decided 'that these dues shall now be abolished; but their abolition 'was necessarily considered in the fixation of rents. Thus, 'if a man paid Rs. 3 rent and R. 1 *pāndhri*, and the 'deduced rent for his land amounted to Rs. 4-8, it is 'clear that his rent could easily be fixed at Rs. 4 or 'Rs. 4-8 although the percentage of increase in his rent 'was large.'

Proprietors' home farm.

155. Over the whole District the home farm, which generally includes the best land in the village, was valued at R. 1-2-1 an acre as against an all-round tenant rate of 15 annas 4 pies. In the *khālsa* the home farm valuation was R. 1-3-4 against a

tenant rate of R. 1-0-2. The moderation of this rate was proved by the fact that 13,068 acres of *sīr* land were sublet to tenants for Rs. 22,852 or at the rate of R. 1-12 an acre, while 1890 acres were let on grain rents valued at Rs. 5057 or at the rate of Rs. 2-10-10 an acre.

Miscellaneous income.

156. The *siwai* income was estimated at a lenient rate at Rs. 66,000, but in order to allow for fluctuations a deduction of 26 per cent. was made from this sum, leaving the amount included in the assets at Rs. 49,000. The main rule followed was to assess 4 annas on every mango tree and 2 annas on every mahuā tree belonging to the mālguzār. Mangoes however were not assessed when the mālguzārs agreed not to keep them exclusively for their own use and to allow anyone to pick fruit to eat, and large reductions were made for old and immature trees. For mahuā trees situated in jungles a merely nominal assessment was made, as not only do they not flower so well, but the flowers are also consumed to a great extent by wild animals. Fisheries, rents of tanks for sowing *singhāra* or water-nuts, and of river sands for planting melons were as a rule capable of fairly exact assessment. Bazar dues were only included in the villages of Lakhāndur and Amgaon, and mālguzārs of other villages are no longer permitted to levy bazar dues. Water-rates for tank water used by tenants for sugarcane gardens were calculated as far as might be from the average collections for the past few years. There was a great deal of concealment in this matter. In the zamīndāris there are 745 square miles of forest land, the profits of which had to be ascertained with no trustworthy data as a basis for calculation. The income was estimated at Rs. 56,000, giving a total of *siwai* income for the whole District of Rs. 1·05 lakhs.

Comparison of assets.

157. The following statement compares the assets as ascertained at revision with those of the former settlement :—

	At 30 years' settlement.			At new settlement.		
	Khālsa.	Zamīndāri.	Total.	Khālsa.	Zamīndāri.	Total.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Mālik-makbūzas' payments and tenants' rental.	3,99,000	1,22,000	5,21,000	5,84,000	2,31,000	8,15,000
Rental value of sīr, khudkāsht and land held by privileged tenants.	94,000	34,000	1,28,000	1,84,000	67,000	2,51,000
Siwai income ...	63,000	34,000	97,000	49,000	56,000	1,05,000
Total ...	5,56,000	1,90,000	7,46,000	8,17,000	3,54,000	11,71,000

The total assets at the revised settlement were thus Rs. 11·72 lakhs as against Rs. 7·45 lakhs at the 30 years' settlement; and the increase of assets was Rs. 4·26 lakhs or 57 per cent.

Enhancement of revenue.

158. The total revenue assessed for the District as a whole was 6·04 lakhs, being Rs. 4·74 lakhs on the mālguzāri and Rs. 1·30 lakhs on the zamīndāri portion of the District. The assessments absorbed 57 per cent. of the assets as against 62 per cent. at the previous settlement. Excluding the payment of plot-proprietors the percentage of the mālguzāri assets absorbed was 55. The revised gross revenue gave an increase of 2·10 lakhs over the existing demand, being at the rate of 38 per cent. in the mālguzāri and 65 per cent. in the zamīndāri area, but if the alienated portions of the estates which are now treated as *khālsa* be included in the zamīndāris the increase in them would be 69 per cent. The net realisable revenue for the District as a whole increased by 1·81 lakhs. Of this Rs. 1·04 lakhs, *i.e.*, Rs. 76,000 in *khālsa* and Rs. 28,000 in the zamīndāris were made good to the proprietors by the enhancement of the payments cf tenants. The revenue rate per acre in cultivation was raised from 9 annas 2 pies to

10 annas 11 pies or by 19 per cent. The balance of assets left to the mālguzārs of the *khālsa* was Rs. 3·09 lakhs as against Rs 2·10 lakhs at the previous settlement, taking cesses into consideration. The decrease in the cash income of the mālguzārs entailed by revision of settlement was Rs. 65,000. In a few cases progressive assessments were allowed, entailing a loss of revenue of Rs. 4600.

Zamīndāri takolī.

159. In the zamīndāris of the Tirorā tahsīl the assets amounted to Rs. 2·83 lakhs and in those of Sākoli tahsīl to Rs. 72,000. On these a *takolī* of Rs. 1·24 lakhs, including cesses, was assessed in the Tirorā tahsīl and Rs. 29,000 in the Sākoli tahsīl, being at the rate of 44 and 40 per cent. respectively. The total *takolī* with cesses was Rs. 1·53 lakhs, giving an increase of Rs. 61,000 or 40 per cent on the payments prior to revision, and being at the rate of 43 per cent. of the assets. The net *takolī* without cesses was Rs. 1·30 lakhs, and the *kāmil-jamā* or the amount which the zamīndārs would have had to pay if assessed at the same rate as mālguzārs was Rs. 1·97 lakhs. On the average therefore the zamīndārs were assessed at about two-thirds of the mālguzāri rate. In a few cases, the assessment of the *takolī* was made progressive, the amount of revenue so relinquished being nearly Rs. 6000. The increase effected in the rental left a net gain to the zamīndārs of Rs. 7000 after deducting the increase in *takolī*.

The zamīndāris.

160. The zamīndāris cover an area of 1430 square miles or more than a third of the whole District and include 411 square miles classed as forest mahāls. Some of the zamīndāris were grants from the old Gond dynasties of Mandlā and Chānda, but the most important, Kāmtha and Amgaon and a few others, were granted to a Kunbī family by the Bhonslas. The zamīndārs had at one time considerable powers, but these were gradually cut down, and at the last settlement they were reduced practically to the position of large landowners, differing from ordinary mālguzārs in that they paid, instead of the *kāmil-jamā*

or full revenue assessed on their estates, a reduced *takolī* or quit-revenue. They were also allowed to retain their extensive forest lands, which would ordinarily have been converted into Government forest. A few zamīndāris in the Sākoli tahsīl were permitted to collect the *pāndhri* tax, but this right has now been withdrawn. The total number of zamindāris may be taken at 33 excluding Saolī-Dongargaon which has been wholly alienated. Several of the zamīndāris are utterly insignificant, containing less than five villages, and there can be little doubt that if the question came up for decision at the present time, the tenure would not be conferred on such estates. The fact that the zamīndāris were not declared impartible and inalienable has also led to complications. In several estates separate villages or shares of the whole estate have been transferred and these have to be assessed at the full rates for mālguzāri villages, the favourable proportion of the assets taken as *takolī* being naturally not continued to outsiders. Hence arises the necessity in making the assessment of calculating in all cases the *kāmil-jamā* or revenue which the estate would pay at full mālguzāri rates.

Zamīndāri forests.

161. An important change has been made in the assessment of forest lands in the zamīndāris. At the last settlement a fair share of forest was allotted to occupied villages, and these were called *dochand* mahāls. The extra or *fāzil* jungle was converted into forest mahāls. In order that the uncertain income derived from these might be periodically reconsidered, it was decided to assess them every third year, but this policy only led to wasteful cutting, and has now been abandoned. The forest mahāls have now been assessed once for all for the whole term of settlement, a step which should induce more careful conservation of these valuable assets. A single *takolī* is fixed for the whole zamīndāri, including both forest and occupied land Cesses are now to be paid on forest mahāls; but their imposition is fully counterbalanced by the longer term of assessment, and by the fact that whereas at the for-

mer settlement these forest mahāls had to pay to Government the whole of the *kāmil-jamā* assessed on them, they now only contribute to the *takolī* levied on the *kāmil-jamā* of the zamīndāri as a whole.

The Record of Rights.

162. The Wājib-ul-arz or Record of Rights was drawn up in a standard form for every village in the District, while there was a separate Wājib-ul-arz for each zamīndāri. Under the former the Deputy Commissioner may order the destruction of the hides of cattle where there is a suspicion that they have been poisoned. The collection of bazar dues by mālguzārs is prohibited. The obligation of tenants to assist in the repair of village tanks is enforced. The Wājib-ul-arz does not record rights to or easements in respect of water. In the zamīndāri Wājib-ul-arz it is provided that there shall be a manager for the estate, chosen in the same manner as the lambardār of a village, while in the case of a minor an agent shall be appointed by the Deputy Commissioner. The manager may not transfer any part of the estate, with the exception of his own share, except with the consent of all the co-sharers. Inferior proprietary right cannot be created by the zamīndār. Provisions are inserted for the assumption by Government of the management of zamīndāri forests, if extravagantly worked by the zamīndār. The zamīndār is permitted to take *bigār* or free labour of four days' work in the year from each plough with ploughman and bullocks for his cultivation in the same village, and of one day's work of a man from each house for thatching his houses. No provisions as to *bigār* are inserted in the case of mālguzāri villages.

Period and cost of settlement.

163. The revised settlement came into effect between 1896 and 1900 in different groups. It will remain in force for a period of 17 to 19 years and will expire in the years 1915—1917. The cost of the settlement, excluding the traverse survey, was Rs. 3·45 lakhs or Rs. 101 per square mile, made up of Rs. 34 for the cadastral survey and Rs. 67 for

the assessment. The cost of assessment was increased by the famine of 1897, which greatly delayed the work.

Abatements of revenue.

164. The new settlement was a moderate one and the revenue would have been paid without difficulty, but for the series of bad years which accompanied and followed its introduction. The details of these have been given elsewhere[1]. In four out of eight years between 1895 and 1903, the District got less than a third of a normal crop, and the consequences of such bad seasons could not but be felt. The parts which suffered most were the forest tracts bordering on Bālāghāt District and portions of the south-eastern zamīndāris, with scattered areas elsewhere. In 1902 the rents and revenue of all villages which showed a decline of 15 per cent. or more in the net cropped area were abated for a term of three years in proportion to the decrease in cropping. The results were that in 418 villages, the rental was reduced by Rs. 25,000 or 23 per cent. and the land revenue by Rs. 26,000 or 25 per cent. of the demand on these villages.

Cesses.

165. The demand on account of the road, school and postal cesses was Rs. 32,000 in 1906-07. The postal cess has now been added to the road cess, the cost of the District post being met from Imperial revenues. The demand for land revenue on the roll in the same year was Rs. 5·70 lakhs. The abolition of the patwāri cess and the additional rate have effected a reduction of Rs. 33,000 in the payments of proprietors.

Statistics of tenures.

166. The total area included in holdings in 1905-06 was 1,086,000 acres. Of this 165,793 acres or 15 per cent. of the total were held as *sīr* land and 62,647 acres or 6 per cent. as *khudkāsht* land. The home farm was 21 per cent. of the occupied area in the *kkālsa* and 20 per cent. in the zamīndāris. *Mālik-makbūzas* held 65,000 acres or 6 per cent. of the total, absolute

[1] See Chapter on Famine and section on Material Condition of the People.

occupancy tenants 114,000 acres or 11 per cent., occupancy tenants 298,000 acres or 28 per cent. and ordinary tenants 374,000 acres or 35 per cent. An area of 5000 acres was held rent-free from the proprietors. Since the settlement (1894—1899) the area held by occupancy tenants has decreased by 12,000 acres and that held by absolute occupancy tenants by 4000 acres, while ordinary tenants hold an increased area of 15,000 acres. A total area of 40,000 acres was sublet in 1904-05 at an average rent of R. 1-15-4 an acre as against the average of R. 1-12 at settlement.

Special tenures and revenue-free grants.

167. The 33 zamīndāri estates cover an area of 1430 square miles or 36 per cent. of that of the District. An area of 3000 acres contained in 45 villages has been sold outright under the Waste Land Rules. No land is at present held on ryotwāri tenure in Bhandāra but some allotments will shortly be made in the Sākoli tahsīl. The most important *muāfi* grant is the estate of 37 villages held free of revenue or on quit-rent by members of the Bhonsla family. Of these 14 are held free of revenue by Venkat Rao, adopted son of Chilkojī Rao, who was great-grandson of Rām Rao, the son-in-law of Rājā Raghujī II; and 5 by Naolojī Rao Gūjar, a close relative of the family. Of the remaining 18 villages, 2 are held free of revenue and 16 on quit-rent by the Rājās Raghujī Rao and Lakshman Rao Including less important grants, the total amount of revenue assigned is Rs. 13,000. Inferior proprietary rights exist in 18 villages in the mālguzāri area, of which 8 belong to the Saolī-Dongargaon estate, formerly a zamindrāi. Protected status was awarded to the lessees of seven villages, and occupancy rights in their home farm to three others. In the zamīndāris there are inferior proprietors in more than 160 villages. In some cases the zamīndārs had granted inferior proprietary right in ignorance that it was not within their power to do this. Where it was clear that they did not intend to divest hemselves of their full proprietary right, their action was

ratified by Government after the consideration of each case on its merits. Protected status was conferred on the lessees of 67 villages at settlement, and occupancy rights in their home farm on 17 others. Only one grant has been made since the settlement.

CHAPTER IX.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION.

Subdivisions and Staff.

168. The Deputy Commissioner, who is also District Magistrate and District Registrar, has a staff of three Assistants of whom two are usually Extra Assistant Commissioners, and one is an Assistant Commissioner or member of the Indian Civil Service. For administrative purposes the District is divided into three tahsīls, Bhandāra, Tirorā and Sākoli. According to the census of 1901 the Bhandāra tahsīl contains 594 villages including 84 uninhabited, the Tirorā tahsīl 603 villages including 35 uninhabited and the Sākoli tahsīl 614 villages including 63 uninhabited. Thus the total number of villages in the District is 1811. At last settlement there were 721 perfectly partitioned mahāls in the mālguzāri area of the Bhandāra tahsil, 412 in the Tirorā tahsil and 467 in the Sākoli tahsīl. Each tahsīl has a tahsīldār and a naib-tahsīldār. The civil staff consists of a District and Subordinate Judge, and each tahsīl has a munsiff. One of the Executive Assistants is usually appointed as Additional Judge to the Subordinate Judge, while tahsīldārs are appointed as Additional Judges to the munsiff for civil work. There are 2 Honorary Magistrates at Bhandāra and Amgaon, with 2nd class magisterial powers. A bench of Honorary Magistrates has been recently established at Gondia. The Divisional and Sessions Judge of Nāgpur has jurisdiction in Bhandāra. The office of Civil Surgeon is usually held by a member of the Indian Subordinate Medical Service. The headquarters of the Executive Engineer of the Bhandāra Public Works Division, comprising Bhandāra and Bālāghāt, are at Bhandāra. Bhandāra is included in the Waingangā Irrigation Division with headquarters at Kamptee. The Forest Divisional Officer is usually a member of the Provincial Service.

Land Record Staff.

169. During the currency of the 30 years' settlement the patwāris were the servants of the mālguzārs, who were responsible for the preparation of such village statistics as were then required. But although the work was comparatively light, it was not efficiently performed, owing chiefly to the absence of proper supervision over the staff. In the year 1884 it was therefore decided that the duty of supervising patwāris must be taken over by Government and their pay was provided out of a cess imposed upon mālguzārs supplemented by the customary dues levied from the tenants. This arrangement was however provisionally restricted to the *khālsa* portion of the District, and as a result the circles assigned to patwāris in the tracts which were interlaced with zamīndāri villages inevitably became more or less incompact. At last settlement however the patwāri circles were rearranged irrespective of the difference between the zamīndāri tenures and the *khālsa*. The number of patwāri circles was increased from 185 to 204, while their supervision was entrusted to a Superintendent of Land Records with an Assistant Superintendent and 9 Inspectors. The headquarters of the Revenue Inspectors are at Mohāli, Tumsar and Adyāl in Bhandāra tahsīl, Tirorā, Rāmpailī and Amgaon in Tirorā tahsīl and Arjunī, Lākhni and Lakhāndur in Sākoli tahsīl. The charge of a Revenue Inspector comprises 23 patwāri's circles on an average, while 9 revenue villages are included in each patwāri' scircle, representing an area of 17 square miles. At last settlement the patwāri cess remained at the rate previously paid of 4 per cent. upon the land revenue on mālguzāri and zamīndāri villages, but the tenant's contribution was changed from dues in kind to a money rate of three pies per rupee of rental. The rates of remuneration of patwāris vary between Rs. 120 and Rs. 144 per annum. In 1906 the patwāri cess was abolished and the whole cost of the establishment is now met from Provincial revenues. The patwāris are chiefly Marāthā Brāhmans with a fair sprinkling of Muhammadans

Kalārs and Kunbīs. They are intelligent and efficient as a whole, but require careful supervision. A few of them eke out their income by cultivation of land within their circles.

Litigation and crime.

170. Crime in the District is usually light, but Bhandāra has gained an unenviable notoriety for heinous crime, especially murder. During the decade ending 1905 no less than 69 persons were convicted of offences affecting human life. The number of convictions for grievous hurt was 143 during the same period. House-breaking and theft are moderately frequent offences. The average number of convictions for these offences in a normal year is about 200, but, as might be expected, this form of crime increased enormously during the famines of 1897 and 1899, when the convictions were 967 and 939. The Bhandāra and Tirorā tahsīls have become easy of access to the professional criminal from outside owing to the opening up of these tracts by railway, and consequently the important cases of house-breaking and theft usually occur along the railway line. The Sākoli tahsīl owes its immunity from the depredations of professional criminals to its inaccessibility, but it too will be traversed shortly by the Gondia-Chānda railway which is in course of construction. The average annual number of cognisable cases sent up for trial during the ten years ending 1904 was 714 and in 1905, 649. The average annual number of civil suits instituted in the District during the decade ending 1901 was 5700 or about one to every 116 persons according to the last census. The civil litigation does not present any special features The great majority of the cases are based on grain and money bonds; future interest is usually added to the principal sum, the whole being made payable by instalments.

Registration.

171. In 1906 the office of District Registrar was vested in the Deputy Commissioner. Sub-registration offices are located at Bhandāra, Tirorā, Amgaon and Sākoli, each being in charge of a special salaried sub-registrar. The number of documents

registered was over 1200 in 1891 and rose steadily till 1896-97 when it reached nearly 2000; but there has been a marked decrease since, the number registered in 1905 slightly exceeding 900. The average receipts for the decade ending 1904-05 were Rs. 4400, the maximum being Rs. 6714 in 1897-98.

Statistics of revenue.

172. The following statement shows the receipts under the principal heads of revenue at the end of the last two decades and in subsequent years.

Year.	Land revenue.	Cesses.	Stamps.	Excise.	Forests.	Registration.	Income tax.	Other receipts.	Total.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs	Rs
1880-81	3,73,000	29,000	64,000	1,72,000	44,000	3,000	...	42,000	7,27,000
1890-91	3,86,000	50,000	85,000	2,04,000	58,000	5,000	10,000	21,000	8,19,000
1900-01	2,88,000	26,000	62,000	1,27,000	33,000	3,000	12,000	16,000	5,67,000
1903-04	5,62,000	38,000	60,000	1,60,000	45,000	3,000	7,000	7,000	8,82,000
1904-05	4,32,000	57,000	69,000	2,32,000	50,000	3,000	7,000	7,000	8,57,000
1905-06	5,43,000	50,000	76,000	2,15,000	62,000	4,000	7,000	15,000	9,72,000

Excise.

173. For many years the supply of country liquor has been afforded by a *sadar* or central distillery at headquarters, serving a small part of the Bhandāra tahsīl, and a *sadar* distillery at Paunī serving the Paunī tract, with outstills for the remainder of the District. The *sadar* distillery area was extended in 1905-06 to the bulk of the Bhandāra and Tirorā tahsīls, Sākoli being under outstills. The separate distillery at Paunī still exists. The income from country spirit has expanded enormously in the last few years and is over a lakh and a half; it will probably in the near future reach two lakhs. The number of *sadar* distillery shops is 209 and the number of

outstill shops 145. This gives one shop to 11 square miles and to 1873 persons. There is no *tāri* revenue, and the amount of foreign spirit drunk is insignificant. The income from opium has risen again to what it was before the famines and is now Rs. 15,000 from license fees and Rs. 35,000 from duty, which may be taken as the normal figure for this District. *Gānja* realises about Rs. 15,000, the bulk of which, owing to the increase in the duty a few years ago, is now obtained from that source. The District will never absorb very large quantities of opium or *gānja*. But the consumption of country spirit is extraordinarily steady and the people could probably pay the higher prices of the contract distillery system without difficulty.

District Council.

174. The area of the District outside the three municipal towns is under the control of a District Council, with three Local Boards subordinate to it. The principal matters with which the Council deals are education, pounds, ferries, village sanitation and to a minor extent communications. District Council finance is somewhat complicated. It is nominally responsible for the upkeep of roads, but these are almost all managed by the Public Works Department and the Council pays a lump sum to the Department for them. On the other hand, the Council receives a large contribution from Provincial revenues. Government also makes a considerable allotment to the Council for educational purposes, at the same time prescribing most of the objects on which it shall be spent. The recent grants of the Government of India to local bodies have improved its position, but its solvency is and must for long be dependent on the Government contributions. The principal sources of income are Provincial rates Rs. 28,000, contributions from Provincial funds Rs. 35,000 and pounds Rs. 4000. The Council spends Rs. 33,000 on education and its members take most interest in this subject, a good deal of work being done both by the Council as a whole and by individual members in the control, inspection and management of schools.

Cattle pounds (expenditure Rs. 3000) have been entirely taken over from the police, and are very fairly well managed. The Council contributes fixed sums to the dispensaries of the District, but has no control over the spending of them. It has in recent years spent considerable amounts on village water-supply, sometimes supplemented by local subscriptions, and has drawn out a programme extending over a number of years. The expenditure on this object amounts to Rs. 7000 to Rs. 8000 annually. Under civil works, the Council maintains one metalled road, and has begun the construction of a new one from Paunī to Lakhāndur, which is progressing slowly, but as fast as funds will permit. The income of the Council has expanded rapidly in the last few years owing to increased grants from Provincial and Imperial sources, and the figures for the famine and subsequent years have fluctuated violently owing to remission and arrear collections of cesses. The statistics given are for 1905-06.

The Local Boards have no independent income, though there has been much discussion on the question of giving them allotments. The bulk of the executive work however falls on them and a great deal of quiet management and inspection that never comes to light is done by the Boards and by the members of them individually.

Municipal towns. Bhandāra.

175. The District has three municipalities—Bhandāra, Tumsar and Paunī.

The Bhandāra municipality has a population of 14,023 with a committee of 8 elected and 5 nominated members. Its principal sources of income are octroi Rs. 12,000, water-rate Rs. 8600, conservancy Rs. 2500, and a Government grant Rs. 3000. The heaviest item of expense is the upkeep of the water-works and the repayment of the debt incurred on them. The cost of upkeep was Rs. 6000 in 1905-06 and is likely to increase. On conservancy about Rs. 5000 are spent annually and public latrines of a modern pattern to the

standard judged sufficient for the needs of the town have been built. The expenditure on education is about Rs. 6000.

The committee has for many years struggled on the edge of solvency, but with the increase obtained from octroi on the introduction of a revised schedule in 1904, its position has become more favourable. But the increase in the price of fuel for the waterworks engines is a counterbalancing item. A drainage system is urgently needed in the town, but there is no prospect of the work being undertaken at present.

Tumsar

176. Tumsar with a population of 8116 has a committee of 5 elected and 3 nominated members. An Executive Extra Assistant Commissioner is president. Its income is chiefly derived from a tax on incomes yielding Rs. 1100, conservancy tax Rs. 400 and market dues Rs. 1500. This last source of income was much curtailed by the recent bad seasons and in three years fell below Rs. 1000. The construction of the Sītpurā railway and the increased importance of Gondia have drawn away some of the trade of Tumsar, but the town is still fairly flourishing. The municipality keeps up a vernacular middle school and would much like an Anglo-vernacular school which it cannot at present afford. It has also a small girls' school opened by the Chief Commissioner in 1902. It is engaged on reconstructing its market, a work which will cost about Rs. 4000, and is being spread over several years.

Paunī.

177. Paunī with a population of 9366 has a committee of 5 elected and 3 nominated members. The Extra Assistant Commissioner who is president of the Tumsar committee is also the president of the Paunī one. The principal head of receipt is a tax on incomes. The committee formerly received Rs. 600 for the ferry over the Waingangā which is close to the town, but this has been transferred to the Public Works Department and a Government grant of Rs. 600 given in lieu of

it. The town maintains a vernacular middle school and a flourishing girls' school established in 1870. The people want an English middle school. Paunī is a conservative town controlled by the straitest sect of Brāhmans. A great uproar was caused about a year ago by the admission of Mahārs to the middle school, but it has now quieted down, and the school is flourishing. The town has fallen into a backwater owing to the diversion of traffic from its old routes by new railways and roads. When the Gondia-Chānda line is completed its importance may partially revive.

Village sanitation.

178. There are two towns under the Village Sanitation Act, Gondia and Tirorā. Gondia has really outgrown this method of administration and will be shortly made a notified area under the Municipal Act. Gondia has an average annual income and expenditure of about Rs. 2000 and Tirorā of about Rs. 800.

Public Works.

179. There are two Imperial public buildings in the District, the combined post and telegraph offices at Bhandāra and Gondia. The total value of the Provincial public buildings in the District is about 4½ lakhs of rupees and the annual maintenance charges amount to Rs 5000. The District Court was constructed before 1870 and the present value of the building is about Rs. 66,000. St. Paul's Church dates from 1865, its value being Rs. 6300. The cemetery was opened about the year 1860. The circuit house was built in 1892 at a cost of Rs. 11,000. The jail at Bhandāra is located in the old fort, which was brought into use in 1882 for this purpose by constructing the necessary barracks, wards, store-rooms, cells, work-sheds and quarters for the jail officials at a cost of about Rs. 1,11,000. This included the reconstruction of a portion of the old circumvallation wall. The bungalows occupied by the District Superintendent of Police and Executive Engineer are owned by Government.

Police.

180. In 1906 the sanctioned strength of the police force was 351 officers and men. This included 1 District Superintendent, 2 Inspectors, 11 Sub-Inspectors, 54 head-constables and 305 constables, including 3 mounted constables. The District contains 7 Station-houses and 19 outposts. The Station-houses are located at Bhandāra, Tumsar and Paunī in Bhandāra tahsīl, Tirorā and Gondia in Tirorā tahsīl, and Sākoli and Nawegaon in Sākoli tahsīl. As a result of the reforms advocated by the Police Commission, the outposts will probably be replaced by 9 additional Station-houses. Each new police Station will be an independent charge with a staff of 1 Sub-Inspector, 2 head-constables and 12 to 24 constables. It is also in contemplation to concentrate a large staff of railway police under a separate Railway Inspector at Gondīa. The proportion of police engaged in the detection and prevention of crime in 1906 was one for every 13 square miles and 2139 persons as against the Provincial figures of 9 square miles and 1061 persons. The southern portion of the District is very jungly and markedly free from crime. Indeed, nearly all the crime of importance takes place along the railway line in the Bhandāra, Tumsar, Tirorā, and Gondia circles. The cost of the police force in 1906 was Rs. 66,000. The recruiting of the force presents no difficulty, but the class of men obtainable is not very good and as a rule they decline to leave the District.

Kotwārs.

181. The kotwārs were until the last settlement paid in kind; their remuneration consisted of 2 *kuros* (20 seers) of grain per tenant together with a perquisite called *khallā bhāra* given at the threshing floor and varying in amount with the wealth of the tenant. This system was abolished in favour of cash remuneration on account of its inherent defects. In the first place the mālguzār and non-resident tenants frequently evaded payment, and secondly, save for the *khallā bhāra*, the burden was the same for rich and poor tenants

alike. The present arrangement is based on a fixed payment up to one anna in the rupee of rental, according to the exigencies of the village, and the mālguzār is forced to contribute according to the rental value of his home farm, but his contribution must not fall short of a fourth of the total remuneration of the kotwār. This can now be recovered as an arrear of land revenue, and thus the position of the kotwār is vastly improved. In addition to the cash payments, the kotwārs have also a right to the hides of dead cattle, provided that their death is not due to poisoning or other unnatural cause. Owing to the marked increase in the value of hides of late years, this is by no means an insignificant item, especially in large villages. Previous to the last settlement the office of kotwār was not seldom subdivided among a number of sharers, who performed its duties in rotation. This obnoxious custom was abolished and the total number of kotwārs was reduced from 2888 to 2430 at settlement. There are altogether 696 villages in the District which maintain more than one kotwār; 12 of them having five or more. A single kotwār is maintained in 756 villages and in the remainder one or more kotwārs perform the duties for more than one village. The rate of remuneration usually varies from Rs. 30 to Rs. 60 per annum. The kotwārs are usually Mahārs with a sprinkling of Pardhāns and Holiās. They perform their duties efficiently.

Jail.

182. Bhandāra has a fourth-class jail under the management of the Civil Surgeon, with accommodation for 126 prisoners, including 11 females. The average daily number of prisoners in the last four years has been :—*1902*, 82; *1903*, 84; *1904*, 70; *1905*, 65. Of the 333 prisoners admitted in 1905, 41 were women, 32 were literate and 11 were persons in the employment of Government or Local Bodies. The total expenditure in 1905 was Rs. 7000 The cost of maintenance per head is about Rs. 90 annually and the cash earnings of working prisoners about Rs. 10. The principal industries are aloe-

pounding, stone-breaking and grinding grain. The health of the prisoners is generally good.

Education.

183. The Bhandāra District occupies a fairly high place in the Province in regard to education. The number of schools has increased from 50 to 141 and the number of scholars from 3691 to 8696 since 1880-81. It is the fourth District in the Province in respect of the number of its schools and 52 per thousand of males can read and write. The standard of literacy among Muhammadans and Jains is markedly higher than the average for the District. Female education is comparatively backward, only 199 females being returned as literate at last census. The Monro High school, Bhandāra, is the only High school in the District. This was originally a middle school and was raised to the status of a High school in 1903-04. In 1905-06 it contained 55 scholars in the High school and 71 in the middle department. There are two English middle schools in Bhandāra; one is a municipal school with 139 scholars and the other is a mission school with 21 scholars. There are five vernacular middle schools in the District including one belonging to the United Free Church Mission with 171 scholars; of these four have training classes for the teachers' certificate examination. The number of primary schools is 129 with 7156 scholars. Two schools, containing 142 scholars, are supported by the United Free Church Mission and two are maintained by private persons with grants from Government. The District has four girls' schools, two departmental and two aided, containing 196 girls in all. The aided schools are at headquarters and the departmental schools are at Paunī and Tumsar. Of the 8696 scholars in 1905-06, 1344 were in receipt of secondary and 7352 of primary education. The percentage of children under instruction to those of school-going age in this year was 18 for boys and less than a half per cent. for girls. The expenditure on education increased from Rs. 31,000 in 1901-02 to Rs. 45,000 in 1902-03 and to Rs 51,000 in

1905-06. In the latter year Rs. 10,500 were provided from Provincial revenues, Rs. 35,000 from local funds and Rs 5500 from other sources. The District is under the Inspector of Schools for the Nāgpur Circle and has two Deputy Inspectors.

Medical relief.

184. The District has altogether 10 dispensaries, 4 at headquarters including the mission hospital, and the remainder at Tumsar, Tirorā, Gondia, Sākoli, Nawegaon and Paunī. The public dispensaries have accommodation for 40 in-patients, the Bhandāra main dispensary containing 16 beds. The police dispensary contains accommodation for 10 patients. The daily average number of indoor patients at the public dispensaries during the decade ending 1901 was 10 and that of outdoor patients 517. The number of patients treated at the public dispensaries during the years 1901 to 1905 averaged 89,000 annually. The mission hospital was started in 1889 by the United Free Church Mission. In 1895 the present hospital blocks, comprising male and female wards, operation rooms, two private wards, Hospital Assistant's quarters, and store rooms, were erected as a memorial to the late Revd. Robert Barbour of Bonskeiel, Scotland, who left funds for the salary of the Medical Missionary. During 1905-06 the operation room was reconstructed and equipped with the most modern surgical appliances. An additional piece of land was purchased and added to the compound, on which new sanitary arrangements and a shelter for the open air treatment of consumptives are to be erected. The income of the public dispensaries in 1905 was Rs. 14,500, of which the greater part was provided from Provincial and local funds. The principal diseases treated were malarial fevers and bowel and chest complaints. The number of operations performed annually during the decade ending 1901 approximated to 1600. A midwife is employed at the main dispensary and one at the branch dispensary, Gondia.

A veterinary dispensary was opened in May 1904, at, Bhandāra. The total number of cases treated up to the end

of 1906 was 2195, including 409 cases treated in camp. In addition 562 inoculations were performed for rinderpest during the same period.

Vaccination is only compulsory in the municipal towns of Bhandāra, Tumsar and Paunī, but is carried on throughout the District from October to March yearly. In towns 10 to 13 per cent. of the population have been vaccinated annually during the last few years. Taking the District as a whole, 26,114 people were vaccinated during 1904-05; the cost per successful case was R. 0-1-9, and the total rate per *mille* of population was 39 in this year, the percentage of successful primary vaccinations being 99. Over 96 per cent. of the children born and surviving to one year of age have been vaccinated since 1891. The number of revaccinations has been about 800 annually from 1901 to 1905. The staff employed during 1904-05 consisted of one native Superintendent and 14 vaccinators. The cost of the operations in 1904-05 was Rs. 2500.

APPENDIX.

GAZETTEER OF TAHSILS, ZAMINDARIS, TOWNS, IMPORTANT VILLAGES, RIVERS AND HILLS.

APPENDIX.

GAZETTEER OF TAHSILS, ZAMINDARIS, TOWNS, IMPORTANT VILLAGES, RIVERS AND HILLS.

Adyal.—A large village in the Bhandāra tahsīl, 14 miles south of Bhandāra on the Paunī road. Its area is about 1300 acres and the population in 1901 was 3074 as against 3436 in 1891. The village contains an old temple of Mahābīr or Hanumān with a large image supposed to have come out of the ground by itself. A stone image of the Jain god Pārasnāth was dug up during some excavations some years ago. The village has five or six good-sized tanks. A number of Gāndlis reside here and have substantial houses. Silk-bordered cloths are woven here, and bamboo baskets and matting are made. Adyāl contains a police outpost, a primary school, a post office and an inspection hut. The proprietor is Jairām Patel Gāndli. His family formerly owned 12 villages, but the property has been much subdivided and he is now heavily involved. The village is under the Mukaddam Rules and a small sum is realised annually for sanitary purposes.

Ambagarh Range.—A low range of hills forming an outlier of the Sātpurās, which enters Bhandāra from the west, and trending in a north-easterly direction cuts off the valley of the Bāwantharī river from the rest of the District. Soon after entering Bhandāra the ridge is crowned by the fortress of Ambāgarh, while further east the village and ruined fort of Chāndpur stand on a fine bluff overlooking the junction of the Waingangā and Bāwantharī. The range though of small elevation is yet remarkable for the beauty and ruggedness of its scenery. At its western extremity in the Nāgpur District is the hill covered by the well-known temples of Rāmtek. Throughout the range basaltic and other trappean formations predominate.

Ambagarh Village.—(The fort of the mangoes). A small village in the Bhandāra tahsīl, 18 miles north of Bhandāra, with a population of about 500 persons. On a bluff above the village, forming the end of the Ambāgarh range, stands the fort of that name, which is supposed to have been built by a Pathān governor of Seonī under the Gond Rājā Bakht Buland (*circa* 1700 A.D.). In the time of the Bhonslas it was used as a prison and it is said that prisoners were sent there to be poisoned by being compelled to drink the dark and stagnant waters of the inner well of the fort. One Kadū Patel of Mohāli died in the fort at this time, having been imprisoned on an accusation of sorcery. He has since been deified and worshipped, especially by the Koshtīs. He is known as Ambāgarhia Deo and people offer goats and fowls to him in order to be cured of diseases. The gate of the fort still stands facing to the east, but the remainder is in ruins. There is a small tank on the hill and from this water is supposed to flow to a Gaimukh or spring lower down. The proprietor of the village is a Muhammadan and a number of followers of this religion are found in the locality.

Amgaon Zamindari.—This estate consists for the most part of a long and narrow strip of country in the valley of the Bāgh river, widening considerably towards the south. The headquarters, Amgaon, is a station on the Bengal-Nāgpur railway. The country is generally open and fertile, the best land being found in a few villages round Amgaon and on the bank of the Bāgh. The zamīndāri has an area of 76 square miles and contains 38 villages In 1796 the estate was granted by the Marāthās to Sonā Patel Kunbī, nephew of Chimnā Patel of Kāmtha. The estate was not confiscated in 1818 like Kāmtha. Sonā died childless in 1819 and was succeeded by a nephew Kolhū or Tānia Bāpu who also died childless in 1838. Shortly before his death Tānia had adopted one Chimnā, a boy of the Bhajiāpar family. This excited much discontent, because he was not a member of the Kāmtha house, and Durgā, grandson of Kolhū, the founder of

the family, took possession of the estate and held it for some little time, until the adoption of Chimnā was sanctioned by Government. Chimnā however soon died, and Tānia Bāpu's widow, Rājā Bai, adopted the present zamīndār, Mādho Rao, who is fifth in descent from Kolhū Patel, first zamīndār of Kāmtha, through his eldest son Rāma. The estate was heavily involved, but Mādho Rao when he came to years of discretion set to work to make arrangements for the payment of his debts in a most systematic manner. He has now cleared himself, and has also spent a good deal on the improvement of the estate and has built a residence for himself. He is 52 years old, (1907), knows a little English and is the most capable administrator among the Bhandāra zamīndārs. He is however not a very good landlord to his tenants. The population in 1901 was 20,775, having decreased by 20 per cent. during the previous decade. The density is 273 persons per square mile. The net cropped area was 23,000 acres in 1906-07 and had decreased by 5000 acres since the settlement. About 9000 acres are double-cropped and there are nearly 700 tanks in the estate. Of the 38 villages, 18 are held by inferior proprietors and two by lessees. The *takolī* fixed at settlement was Rs. 10,000, being 38 per cent. of the estimated income of the zamīndār. In 1906-07 the demand for land revenue was Rs. 9800 and for cesses Rs. 530. Phukimetā and Saolī-Dongargaon were subordinate zamīndāris to Amgaon; the latter is now an ordinary mālguzāri estate, and the zamīndār of Amgaon receives no income from Phukimetā.

Amgaon Village.—(The mango village.) A large village in the Tirorā tahsīl, about sixty miles north-west of Bhandāra and two miles from the Bāgh river. It is also a station on the railway, being the seventh from Bhandāra road. The village is a mile from the station. Amgaon is the capitāl of the zamīndāri of the same name. Its area is 3000 acres and the population in 1901 was about 2700 persons as against 2200 in 1891. At Padampur in the neigh-

bourhood are some curious remains of massive stone buildings, whose origin is unknown. Amgaon is best known as the site of the most important cattle-market in the District. Large numbers of infirm and worn-out cattle from Chhattisgarh and Bhandāra are brought here for sale to the Muhammadan butchers who come from Kamptee. A slaughter-house has been established at Gosaintolā six miles from Amgaon. The zamīndār realises registration fees on cattle sold at the rate of a pice in the rupee of the price and the income from this source amounts to about Rs. 200 at each market. A total of 34,000 head of cattle were sold in 1904. A small fair is held in Aghan (November-December) when the zamīndār distributes a day's food to anybody who wants it. There is a fine tank here which was improved by Government in the famine of 1900 at a cost of Rs. 15,000. The village has a primary school, a police outpost, a post office and a sub-registration office. An inspection bungalow has been constructed. The zamīndār is an Honorary Magistrate.

Andhargaon.—(*The dark village.*) A village in the Bhandāra *tahsīl* about 16 miles north of Bhandāra and connected by a surface road with Mohāli. The population was nearly 3000 persons in 1901, having increased by about a hundred during the preceding decade. There is a considerable weaving industry here, silk-bordered cloths for women being chiefly produced. The prices charged for them vary from five to twenty rupees. A market is held on Wednesdays to which some cattle are brought for sale. A sum of about Rs. 250 is raised from the residents under the Mukaddam Rules for sanitary purposes. The village has a primary school, a police outpost and a post office. The proprietor is Krishna Rao Būti.

Arjuni Zamindari.—This estate lies in the east of the Sākoli tahsīl, being traversed by the Great Eastern Road, while another road connects Arjunī with Gondia. Its area is 21 square miles, of which about half are under forest. This estate and that of Dundā appear to have been originally

granted by the Rājā of Deogarh as a reward for assistance given in the destruction of a band of dacoits. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the property was divided in consequence of a family dispute between two brothers, the one Talwār Shā, taking Arjunī, and the other, Gangārām, Dundā. The Dundā estate was afterwards resumed from Gangārām's grandson Chandar Shā, on his being imprisoned for dacoity. The present zamīndār of Arjunī is Rām Lāl Bāpu Rāj-Gond, a boy about 15 years old. The estate is not involved. It consists of 10 villages of which 3 are held by inferior proprietors.

The cropped area in 1906-07 was 2400 acres. Arjunī has a weekly market of some importance and there are a school and post office here. At Deopailī, a village of the zamīndāri, is a shrine which is believed to be under the guardianship of two white tigers, and it is supposed that these make their appearance on the occasion of the death of each zamīndār. Another story is that the Rājā of Nāgpur intended to build a tank by blocking up a pass in the hills, which would rival Nawegaon lake. But so many of the labourers died that he desisted, but he buried the money which would have been expended on the tank in one of the hills where it is still supposed to remain. The income of the estate at settlement was taken to be Rs. 3100, on which a *takolī* of Rs. 1300 was assessed. In 1906-07 the demand for land revenue was Rs. 1200 and for cesses Rs. 63.

Bagh River.—(The Tiger.) A river which rises in the village of Kotjamborā in the Chīchgarh zamīndāri, and flowing from south to north past Amgaon and Kāmtha for about 70 miles, joins the Waingangā near the railway bridge at Borindā, being crossed by the Sātpurā railway just before its junction. This is the river commonly known as the Bāgh to the people of Bhandāra, and it has also been recognised under that name in the Central Provinces Gazetteer. But there is another river of the same name, which rises in the hills of the Khairāgarh State, and forms the boundary between Bhandāra and the Bhādra zamīndāri of Bālāghāt, joining the

Bhandāra river already described on the border. And the Bhandāra Bāgh is also sometimes known as the Sathwānik prior to its junction with the Kaudas stream, though this name does not appear to be in general use locally. In accordance with the common opinion in Bhandāra the stream rising in the Chīchgarh hills, which is much the more important of the two, is here taken as the greater Bāgh. Its chief tributaries are the Kaudas and Pāngoli on the left bank and the Deo, Ghisarī and Son on the right. The total length of the river is 103 miles and the breadth is given as 600 yards shortly above its junction with the Waingangā. Its bed is rocky for the greater part of its course and the river flows between high banks with a swift current, it being said that its name of the Bāgh or tiger is derived from this fact.

Ballahi Range.—A low ridge of sandstone hills capped with granite which overhang the Great Eastern Road a few miles to the west of Bhandāra and form a prominent feature in the landscape. The hills rise about 400 feet above the level of the plain. They are almost bare of vegetation, but afford some pasturage for cattle and plenty of building material in the shape of large slabs of shale and blocks of laterite.

Bawanthari River.—A river which rises on the Sātpurā plateau and after draining the south of the Seonī tahsīl passes into Bhandāra to join the Waingangā. While in the hills it is a comparatively unimportant stream, but on reaching the plains is fed by converging rivulets flowing down the southern edge of the plateau and attains to not unimportant dimensions. The name has been held to signify 'Fifty-two streams.' The bed of the river is generally sandy and one writer says:—'In the Bāwantharī you may walk for miles 'along the bed without a sight of water, but you will get it al-'most anywhere by digging.' The length of the river is 57 miles, of which about 30 miles are within the Bhandāra District. It drains the country round Chāndpur and Ambāgarh, joining the Waingangā between the villages of Mowār and

Baperā about 8 miles east of Chāndpur. The banks are very low and in flood-time the current overflows the surrounding fields, fertilising them by the deposit of silt. Quicksands occur in the bed.

Beni.—A village in the Tirorā tahsīl, 18 miles north-east of Tirorā and 47 miles from Bhandāra. It stands on a high bank overlooking the Waingangā river three miles distant from its junction with the Bāgh. The area is about 1500 acres and the population was 1700 persons in 1901 as against 2400 in 1891. Carpets and quilts are woven here by Mahārs and coloured by Chhīpas and finer weaving cloths for women are produced by Koshtīs. In past years the weaving industry was much more flourishing and important than at present. The village belongs to Rājā Raghuji Rao of Nāgpur.

Bhagi Sub-zamindari.—This is a sub-zamīndāri of Deorī Kishorī, lying in the east of the Sākoli tahsīl, along the Bāgh river. It has an area of 30 square miles, about half of which is covered by forest, *sāj* being the principal timber tree. The estate is held by a Rāj-Gond family and was apparently acquired at the time of Chimnāji Bhonsla's return from Orissa. It is said to have been granted as a reward for the destruction of a man-eating tiger. The family, which is a large one, is related to the zamīndārs of Purāda. The present managing zamīndār is Amān Bāpu, a man of about 50 years of age, who lives at Magardhokrā, 30 miles from Sākoli. He is heavily involved. His debts amounted to Rs. 20,000, but during the conciliation proceedings they were reduced to Rs. 10,000, the village of Sirpur being given up in satisfaction of the remainder. The estate contains 12 villages, of which one is held by an inferior proprietor and the remainder are managed direct by the zamīndār. A half share of two villages, Magardhokrā and Naktī, was attached for a money decree and sold in execution to a European; the share in Magardhokrā was subsequently foreclosed by Mr. Gangādhar Rao Chitnavīs but possession was never taken of

Naktī. These shares have however been assessed at full rates. The assets at settlement were Rs. 3000, on which a lenient *takolī* of Rs. 930 was fixed with Rs. 110 on the alienated villages. The full payment goes to Government through the zamīndār of Deorī. In 1906-07 the demand was Rs. 953 with Rs. 52 for cesses. The village of Sirpur was alienated for debt and the increase is apparently due to the assessment of the full *kāmil-jamā* on it.

General description.

Bhandara Tahsil.—The western tahsil of the District, lying between 20° 40′ and 21° 43′ N. and 79° 27′ and 79° 55′ E. Its area is 1088 square miles or 27 per cent. of that of the District. The tahsīl is a long narrow strip of country about 65 miles long from north to south and varying in width from 7 to 29 miles, the narrowest part being to the south. The Nāgpur District bounds it on the west and to the east the Waingangā separates it for some distance from the Tirorā tahsīl, and then crossing the tahsīl near Bhandāra town flows for a short distance along the Nāgpur border and crosses the tahsīl again in the south, cutting off the small tract known as the Paunī Havelī from the rest of the District. In the extreme north of the tahsil the soil is poor and hilly until the valley of the Bāwanthari is reached. Along this river is found a considerable amount of sugarcane cultivation in the hands of a Kohli settlement. To the south of the valley lie the Ambāgarh hills and south of them again lies the valley of the Sūr river, containing some fertile country. From here south to Adyāl good black soil is generally found, but with sandy hills breaking through it. The cultivation is in consequence of a mixed nature, wheat being grown in the black soil, while along the lower slopes of the hills rice is the prevailing crop. In the neighbourhood of Adyāl the soil is more generally yellow and sandy. South of Adyāl lies the alluvial plain of Paunī Chauras famous for its fertility. Crossing the Waingangā a second time, one finds a number of small poor villages with a

narrow strip of fertile land in the extreme south-west along the Maur river.

Population.

The population of the tahsīl in 1901 was 204,153 persons or 31 per cent. of that of the District. In 1891 the population was 229,287 and in 1881, 234,929. Between 1881 and 1891 the population showed a decrease of 2·4 per cent. as against an increase of 8·6 per cent. for the District as a whole. During the last decade the decrease was 11 per cent. as against 13 in Tirorā and 6½ in Sākoli. As the urban population increased in this decade, that of the rural area has fallen off steadily for a number of years. The decline may probably be attributed partly to emigration to the adjoining District of Nāgpur, and also to the Sākoli tahsīl where a considerable quantity of waste land was available for cultivation. The density of population in 1901 was 187 persons per square mile as against 220 in Tirorā and 108 in Sākoli. The rural density is 162 persons. The tahsīl contains three towns, Bhandāra, Tumsar and Paunī, and 507 inhabited villages according to the census tables. The village lists show 594 towns and villages of which 84 are uninhabited. Besides the towns the villages of Mohāli (4111), Adyāl, Andhārgaon, Jām and Sihorā contained more than 2000 persons in 1901 and 14 villages had more than 1000 persons.

Agriculture.

Owing to the varying configuration of the land, the cultivation of the tahsīl is most diverse. In the black soil, if unembanked, is grown wheat and linseed, while in the embanked fields of Paunī Chauras rice is sown broadcast in the first year and is followed by a crop of urad, linseed or beans. In the poorer soils where the land is not tilled for transplanted rice, juār, arhar and til are grown. In the reddish *sihār* land transplanted rice is raised wherever irrigation is available either from a tank or an embanked wheat-field, and in poor high-lying land kodon and *kulthā* are generally grown.

Statistics of cropping.

Of the total area, 209 square miles or 19 per cent. were recorded as Government forest in 1905-06 and 220 square miles or 20 per cent. consisted of private forest and grass land ; of the village area of 879 square miles a proportion of 64 per cent. was occupied for cultivation, the cultivated area being 310,000 acres. The statistics of cropping at settlement and during the last five years are shown on the next page.

The net cropped area increased from 263,000 acres at settlement to 275,000 in 1905-06 or by 4½ per cent. In this year 34,000 acres were double-cropped as against 36,000 at settlement. Rice and wheat are the staple crops of the tahsīl occupying together a little more than 40 per cent. of the total area. Practically no cotton was grown until recently, but this crop now covers 18,000 acres. Sugarcane was grown on only 300 acres in 1905-06 as against nearly 1000 at settlement and 2300 at the 30 years' settlement.

Land Revenue.

The land revenue demand at the 30 years' settlement was Rs. 1·61 lakhs and was raised at the recent settlement to Rs. 2·23 lakhs, giving an increase of Rs. 61,000 or 38 per cent. on the revenue immediately prior to revision and falling at 58 per cent. of the assets, which amounted to Rs. 3·83 lakhs. Some temporary abatements[1] have been made since the settlement, and in 1905-06 the demand was Rs. 2·10 lakhs. The cesses amount to Rs. 12,000 excluding those recently abolished. At the 30 years' settlement the tahsīl was divided into the parganas of Bhandāra with 131 villages, Ambāgarh with 164, Chāndpur with 162 and Paunī with 139. At last settlement the following assessment groups were formed, the number of villages contained by each being shown in brackets against it :—Paunī Havelī (68), Paunī Chauras (51), Sillī-Mānegaon (74), Adyāl (73), Tumsar (87), Chākaheti (78), Ambāgarh (73) and Bhandāra (80). The average rent-rate per acre was R. 0-15-10 and the revenue rate R. 0-11-11. The Paunī-

[1] See para. 164.

Statistics of cropping, Bhandāra.

Year.	Wheat.	Rice.	Juār.	Gram.	Linseed.	Tiurā lākh.	Urad, mūng and moth.	Cotton.	Sugar-cane.	Double-cropped area.	Total cropped area (*b*).	Irrigated area.
	Acres (*a*).	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
At last settlement ...	63,544	94,006	22,966	13,765	25,142	...	..	...	975	35,749	299,005	46,316
1900-01 ...	26,678	73,122	53,623	14,884	15,704	17,590	15,696	540	310	23,769	284,586	32,312
1901-02 ...	44,543	8,846	51,840	12,288	16,572	19,947	14,432	803	432	28,100	294,657	42,000
1902-03 ...	37,902	68,392	57,359	12,245	14,125	16,899	11,282	2,790	531	14,302	269,409	14,364
1903-04 ...	48,514	74,701	63,624	12,742	17,816	23,000	14,422	10,830	277	32,797	311,517	22,186
1904-05 ...	50,155	66,680	69,859	13,492	14,916	18,245	8,397	13,677	441	19,696	297,340	22,784
1905-06 ...	51,739	80,676	59,719	11,501	17,256	27,419	12,835	17,986	311	33,792	319,144	39,531
Percentage of area under each crop on the total cropped area in 1905-06.	16	25	19	4	5	9	4	6	...	...	...	...

(*a*) Includes wheat-gram.
(*b*) Includes double-cropped area.

Chauras group was the most highly assessed with a rent-rate of R. 1-3-9 and Ambāgarh most lightly with a rate of R. 0-12-3.

Miscellaneous.

The tahsīl is divided into three Revenue Inspectors' circles with headquarters at Mohāli, Tumsar and Adyāl and 63 patwāris' circles. It has three police Station-houses with headquarters at Bhandāra, Tumsar and Paunī and seven outposts.

Locality and population.

Bhandara Town.—The headquarters town of the District, situated in 21° 10′ North and 79° 40′ East near the Waingangā river, and 7 miles from Bhandāra Road station on the Bengal-Nāgpur railway. The town is on the Great Eastern Road and is 38 miles distant from Nāgpur. Bhandāra Road is 559 miles by rail from Bombay. The figures of population in the last four years of census have been as follows :—*1872*, 11,433 ; *1881*, 11,150 ; *1891*, 12,663 ; *1901*, 14,023. In 1901 the population included 1557 Muhammadans, 58 Jains and 76 Christians.

Archæological remains.

Bhandāra is a corruption of Bhānāra, a name by which the people still call the town. Bhānāra is mentioned in an inscription at Ratanpur of about 1100 A.D., the chief of Bhānāra having been at that time a feudatory of the Ratanpur kings. The town is thus an old one, and in view of this inscription, the current derivation from *bhāna* a brass dish, based on the fact that the town has a large brass-working industry, is perhaps doubtful. In the centre of the town are two old Hemādpanthī temples called Ambai and Nīmbai, or the goddesses of the mango and *nīm* trees. There is also an old fort, said to have been built by a Gaolī king, which is now used as a jail. A tank in the town called the Khāmb Talao is also ascribed to the Gaolīs and the pillar in the centre is said to have been that to which their bullocks were tied. But it is in reality only the ordinary sacrificial post erected for worship when the tank was finished. Some temples stand on the banks of

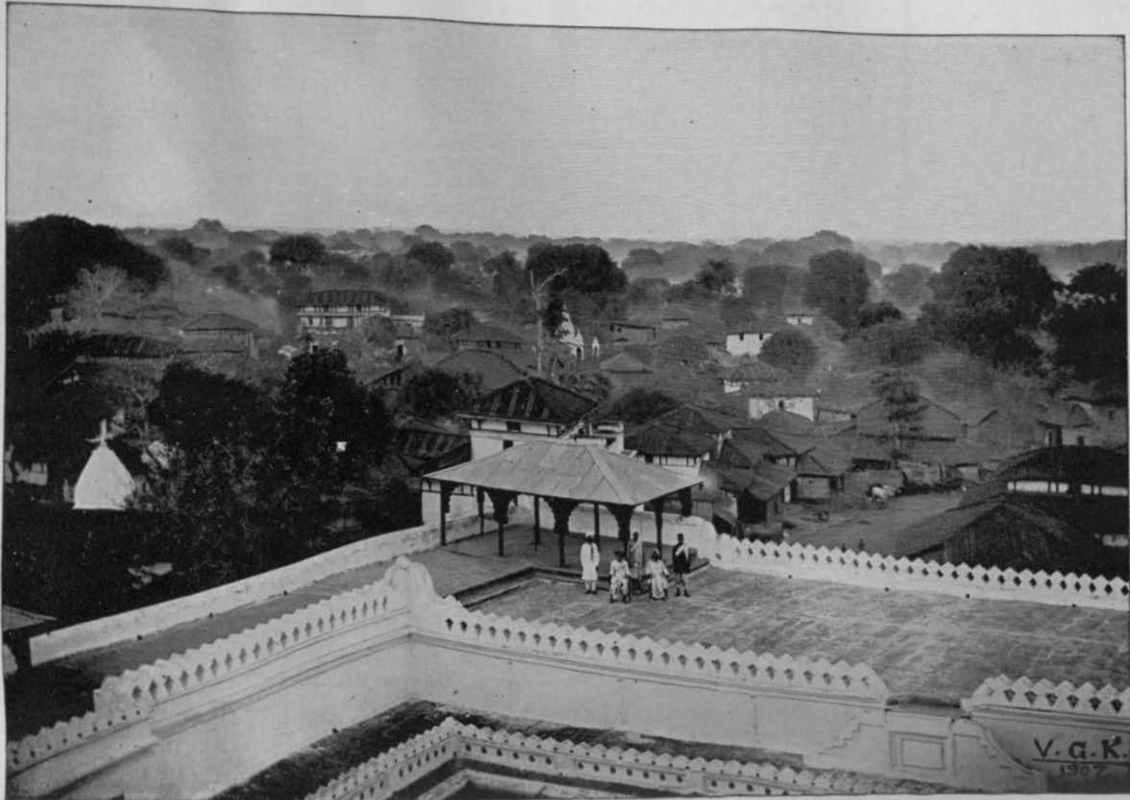


Photo Etching. Roorkee College.

the tank. In one of the suburbs, Mendhā, are two large images of Māroti and Ganpati, and close to them is a *math* or monastery known as *Alon Bābā kā math*. This contains four old temples in which are images of Nārāyana, Lakshm and Mahādeo. The monastery was founded by one Chatarnāth Gosain of the Giri order, who is known as Alon Bābā from the fact that he did not eat salt. This practice is still kept up by his successors. There are numerous *samādhis* or graves of the Gosains near the *math*, which formerly had a maintenance grant of seven or eight villages, but now only retains one of them. Another suburb, Pinglai, has a small Hemādpanthī temple, containing the image of Pinglai Devī. The zamīndāri family of Kāmtha offer a goat and a cocoanut at this temple, on the birth of a boy and girl child respectively, and their children are brought to the temple to have their hair cut for the first time. An annual fair with a wrestling competition was formerly held in honour of the goddess. Near the town are two *takias* or tombs of Muhammadan saints, and feasts for the dead are held here aunually in August or September, food being given free to everybody who comes.

The modern town.

The town of Bhandāra was constituted the District headquarters in 1820, when a European officer was appointed as Superintendent under the Regency of Sir Richard Jenkins. The District had formerly been administered from Lānji. The principal modern buildings are Yādava Rao's house, the Fraser ornamental fountain and the covered market-place built by Mr. Reid. The town is well laid out with broad streets and has a municipal garden. The main street is the Station Road which meets the Great Eastern Road at the District office The principal subsidiary street leads from the middle school to Yādava Rao's house. There is a circuit road of 6 miles round the town. The population consists principally of Koshtīs, Telis, Muhammadans and Brāhmans.

Municipal undertakings and trade.

Bhandāra was created a municipality in 1867, and the average municipal income during the decade ending 1901 was Rs. 35,000. In 1904-05 the income was Rs. 32,000, being principally derived from octroi and a water-rate. The water-supply of the town is obtained from the Waingangā river. Three filtration wells have been sunk in the bed of the river and water is carried from them to a service reservoir near the jail, from which it is distributed over the town in pipes. The works were opened in 1900, the cost of the scheme being Rs. 1·84 lakhs and the annual maintenance charges about Rs. 6000. A large proportion of the cost was raised by local subscriptions, the zamīndār of Kāmtha, Indrarāj Bhau, giving Rs. 55,000. The pumping machinery involves a large expenditure on fuel, the cost of which is now high. About Rs. 10,000 of the Government loan have been paid off and the instalments will continue up to 1919. The principal industry of the town is brass-working and vessels of all kinds are made, especially the large vessels for holding water known as *gund* and *ganj*. Cotton silk-bordered cloths are woven by hand. There are two ginning factories, but it is doubtful whether the quantity of cotton grown locally is sufficient to keep them in full work. The trade of the town is not considerable.

Public institutions.

A private High school named after Mr. Monro, late Director of Public Instruction, was opened in 1904 by Mr. Joshi, a well-known citizen of the town. A fine building for the school, to cost about Rs. 15,000, is in course of construction. The High school has 125 pupils enrolled in its High and Middle school departments. There is also a municipal English Middle school with 135 pupils and another English school supported by the Scotch Church Mission. Proposals to amalgamate the private and municipal schools came to nothing owing to the unwillingness of the managers of the private school to cede any part of their control over it. Other institutions are an Urdū

and two Marāthī primary schools for boys and three girls' schools, one of which is supported by the mission. The medical institutions comprise a main dispensary with accommodation for 13 indoor patients, police and mission hospitals and a veterinary dispensary. A station of the United Free Church of Scotland was established in Bhandāra in 1882. The town has the usual District headquarter offices, post and telegraph offices, a circuit house, dâk bungalow, *sarai* and police Station-house. The construction of a new civil court house, to cost Rs. 51,000 has been sanctioned. The town has at present no public hall and the middle school building is used for meetings. A club for native gentlemen has been established in the District garden and there is a small library and reading-room.

Municipal area.

Bhandāra village comprises 2700 acres, of which 1000 are Government land. The proprietor is Gangādhar Rao Chitnavis. The municipal area is 1200 acres, including the *nazūl* land and about 200 acres of Bhandāra and Pinglai villages.

Bijli Zamindari.—This estate is situated in the east of the Tirorā tahsil between the Bāgh river and the Sālekasā and Darekasā sub-zamīndāris. A considerable part of it is wild and mountainous with forests of inferior species of timber trees and bamboos. There is some open and fertile country along the Bāgh river. The area of the estate is 59 square miles and it contains 29 villages. The estate was granted by Chimnāji Bhonsla, brother of Raghujī II, to the Lodhī family who now own it, in subordination to the zamīndār of Kāmtha, who at that time was the principal executive authority in the tracts east of the Waingangā. In 1856 it became independent of Kāmtha. In 1844 the estate was partitioned between three brothers on payment of a fee of Rs. 10,000 to the Nāgpur Rājā. Two of the shares subsequently vested in one branch of the family represented by three brothers, Bālarām, zamīndār at the 30 years' settlement,

Anand Rao and Ganpat; they held two-thirds of Bijlī itself and 18 other villages together with the sub-zamīndāris of Sālekasā and Darekasā. To the other branch, represented by four brothers, was given a third of Bijlī and 12 villages. Three of the brothers took villages in lieu of their shares and the fourth, Ratan Singh, became sole manager of the third part of the zamīndāri. This is now in the possession of his three sons, Anant Rām, Hīra Rām and Kanhaiyā Lāl, Kanhaiyā Lāl being manager. He is 35 years old and lives at Bijlī. One brother Hīra Rām has taken a village in lieu of his share. Kanhaiyā Lāl is unpopular with his tenants and his brother Anant Rām complains that he hardly gets enough for his food. Kanhaiyā Lāl is heavily involved and in the conciliation proceedings his debts were fixed at Rs. 5000 and made payable by instalments. Bālarām was lambardār of the two-thirds share and spent all the revenues on his own pleasures. He mortgaged four villages, but it was decided in the civil court that he could only alienate a third of each village and the remainder was saved. Anand Rao and Rādha Kisan, adopted son of Ganpat, a real son of Anand Rao, obtained the remainder of Bālarām's share on a decree for profits. Anand Rao's son Nārāyan Rao and Rādha Kisan hold the remainder of the two-thirds share. Nārāyan Rao, who is manager, is 30 years old and lives at Bijlī. The population of Bijlī zamīndāri in 1901 was 12,556 persons, having decreased by 7 per cent. during the previous decade. The density is 213 persons per square mile. The net cropped area is nearly 15,000 acres and has decreased by 1700 acres since the settlement. Of the 29 villages 15 are held by inferior proprietors and 7 by lessees. At settlement the shares were separately assessed. The two-thirds share held by Nārāyan Rao and Rādha Kisan was found to have an income of about Rs. 9000 and a *takolī* of Rs. 4160 was assessed on it. In addition to this the full *kāmil-jamā* or mālguzāri assessment, amounting to Rs. 570, was made payable on the alienated property of a third of four villages.

The one-third share held by Kanhaiyā Lāl and Anant Rām was estimated at Rs. 6200 annual income and a *takolī* of Rs. 2200 was imposed. The assessment has since apparently been considerably reduced, and in 1906-07 it stood at Rs. 4680 on the whole estate with Rs. 260 for cesses.

Bondgaon.—A small village in the Sākoli tahsīl about 13 miles south of Sākoli near the Chūlband river. A local fair is held here in Chait (April) in honour of the goddess Devī who is supposed to dwell in a tank in the village. The fair lasts for a week and the attendance does not exceed 5000. The priest of the temple is much revered and goes about on tour with a train of 50 persons. He is believed to possess the gifts of divination and prophecy. The proprietor is a Kohlī.

Bramhi.—A small village 25 miles south of Bhandāra near Pipalgaon. There is an old well here constructed of long slabs of stone and ascribed to the giants.

Chakaheti.—A village in the extreme north of the Bhandāra tahsīl 40 miles from Bhandāra, with an area of nearly 8000 acres and a population of about 400 persons. There is a small Hemādpanthī temple here, and a graveyard called Satītolā, in which women who had committed *satī* were formerly buried with their husbands. Some pillars with inscribed images have been erected.

Chandan river.—A river which rises in the Bālāghāt District and flowing past Wārāseonī enters Bhandāra, and traverses the fertile plains of Rāmpailī. Passing Rāmpailī itself it joins the Waingangā at Mahalgaon about 10 miles south of that place. The name means sandalwood.

Chandpur.—A village in the Bhandāra tahsīl about 28 miles north of Bhandāra with a population of about 300 persons. Chāndpur was the headquarters of a pargana and the residence of a Kamaishdār. It contains an old fort, on the site of which custard-apple trees now grow. The Chāndpur

pargana or tract is for the most part hilly and is the residence of a number of Gaolīs who are professional cattle-breeders. The soil is metamorphic and the deposits of manganese at present being worked in the District are found in this tract. A large irrigation tank is being constructed here by Government at an estimated cost of about two lakhs. It should be completed in 1908. The area of the tank will be about three square miles. The proprietor of the village is a Baniā.

Chichewada Sub-zamindari.—This estate is a sub-zamindāri of Deorī-Kishorī situated in the east of the Sākoli tahsil to the south of the Great Eastern Road. Its area is 40 square miles, the bulk of which is forest. The zamīndāri belongs to a Halbā family numbering some twelve members; they are heavily indebted. During the conciliation proceedings the debts were reduced to Rs. 2700 and made payable by instalments. But the present zamīndār, Bhikrai Thākur, is very unintelligent. He is about 60 years old and is illiterate. He lives at Jadbhaodā, 24 miles from Sākoli. The zamīndāri is very badly managed. It contains 11 villages, of which five are leased and six managed by the proprietors. The population in 1901 was 1082, having decreased by 38 per cent. during the previous decade. The cropped area is about 1800 acres. The income of the estate was Rs. 2100 at settlement, the bulk of which was derived from the forests; a *takolī* of Rs. 1000 was fixed, the whole of which is payable to Government through the zamīndār of Deorī. One large village Masalkasī, containing more than 6000 acres, has been sold to the superior zamīndār of Deorī, and though he claimed zamīndāri right in it was assessed to the full *kāmil-jamā* at settlement, amounting to Rs. 275. In 1906-07 the revenue demand was Rs. 1050 and that for cesses Rs. 55.

Chichgarh zamindari.—This estate is situated in the south-east corner of the Sākoli tahsil, bordering on the Nāndgaon State and the Chānda District. Its area is 240 square miles, a large proportion of which consists of uncul-

turable hill country covered by forest. The zamīndārs are Halbīs. They have a tradition that they came from the United Provinces, or according to another version the Makrai State, where they were of the status of Rājputs and wore the sacred thread. There, a girl of their family of great beauty was asked in marriage by a Muhammadan king. Her father could not refuse the king but would not give his daughter in marriage to one out of his own caste. So he fled south and took asylum with the Gond Rājā of Chānda. Narsingh Thākur, one of the family, became commander of 500 horse under the Gond Rājā Bīr Shāh (about 1647—72 A.D.) and was rewarded with a grant of part of the Chīchgarh estate. His sons quarrelled and part of the estate was resumed, but was re-granted later to his grandson Nirgun Rao for the destruction of a body of dacoits. The Bārabhāti estate was added to the zamīndāri in 1818 on being confiscated from the zamīndār of Sonsarī in Chānda District for complicity in Appa Sāhib's rebellion. The present zamīndārs are Kesho Rao Bāpu, Sampat Bāpu and Rāmchandra Bāpu, holding the estate in equal shares. Kesho Rao Bāpu, the head of the family, lives at Palāndur, 28 miles from Sākoli. He can read and write. The zamīndāri contains 84 villages of which 11 are uninhabited. The population in 1901 was 13,455 persons, showing a decrease of 7 per cent. during the preceding decade. The cropped area was 20,000 acres in 1906-07, of which about 4000 are irrigated. About 160 square miles are covered by forest and contain teak, *sāj*, *biulā*, *dhaurā* and bamboos. The income of the estate is about Rs. 16,000, of which Rs. 7000 are realised from forests. The *takolī* fixed at settlement was Rs. 5400. In 1906-07 the demand for land revenue was Rs. 4945 and for cesses Rs. 255. The family are now not indebted. Inferior proprietary rights exist in six villages and of the remainder about half are managed direct and half leased to farmers. Chīchgarh has a school, police outpost and post office and there is a school at Palāndur. A large timber-market is held at Kasāri.



Photo Etching, Roorkee College.

RANIDOH POOL NEAR DAREKASA.

taken at Rs. 5000 at settlement, but is now stated to have decreased to about Rs. 3000. In 1906-07 the demand for land revenue and cesses was Rs. 1400, the *takolī* of Rs. 1725 fixed at settlement having been reduced to Rs. 1335.

Darekasa Zamindari.—This estate is a subordinate zamīndāri of Bijlī. It lies in the extreme east of the Tirorā tahsīl between Khairāgarh State and Sālekasā zamīndāri. The area is 45 square miles, most of which is hill and forest. The family are Gonds and some time ago the estate was partitioned between Rām Lāl and Ratan Singh. Both became heavily involved, but Rām Lāl's share was taken under the Court of Wards and extricated from its liabilities; it is still under management on behalf of his widow Musammāt Sagunā, his infant son Bhārat Lāl having recently died. Ratan Singh became almost demented from drink and refused to apply for Court of Wards management. His share was foreclosed by one Dharam Dās, an Uriyā Kāyasth, whose son Rādha Kisan is now its owner. He lives at Bichārpur 4 miles from Darekasā, and this part of the estate is no longer considered as a zamīndāri. Rām Lāl's estate was found to have an income of Rs. 2600 at settlement and a *takolī* of Rs. 1200 was fixed. The alienated share held by Rādha Kisan was valued at Rs. 1900 annually and the full assessment of Rs. 1145 was imposed Nearly three-fourths of the income is derived from the forests. Darekasā is a railway station 80 miles from Bhandāra and has a school. At a little distance from Darekasā there is a waterfall with some picturesque scenery.

Darekasa Village.—A small village in the Tirorā tahsīl, situated on the railway line 73 miles from Bhandāra Road, with a population of 150 persons. In the hills near here at Chāndsūraj there are some curious caves, partly natural and partly artificial. They are called Kachāgarh or the iron fort, *kachā* being the Gondī word for iron. It is said that 200 persons can sit in one cave formed out of a single rock. In

the well-known Gond song recorded by the Rev. Mr. Hislop, Mahādeo is said to have shut up the Gonds in the Kachikopā Lohāgarh or 'The iron cave of the red hill,' closing the mouth of the cave with a large stone. Lingo, the leader of the tribe, rolled away the stone and liberated 16 score of Gonds who were the ancestors of the whole tribe. It is possible that the scene of this legend may have been taken from Darekasā.

Dawa Zamindari.—This zamīndāri is situated in the east of the Sākoli tahsīl between the boundary towards Tirorā and the Great Eastern Road. Its area is 26 square miles, of which about a third is occupied for cultivation, and a large proportion is under scrub jungle. The zamīndāri was held by the family before the Marāthā conquest and was confirmed to Mukā Thākur Halbā in 1775. The Chikhli zamīndāri formed a part of the original grant, but the two villages which it contains were given to a younger branch of the family. Sātu Bāpu Halbā is the present zamīndār and is about 30 years old. He lives at Dāwa, 18 miles from Sākoli, and is heavily involved in debt. During the recent conciliation proceedings his debts were reduced from Rs. 11,600 to Rs. 9150 and were made payable by instalments. The zamīndāri contains 12 villages, of which 8 are held by inferior proprietors and 2 by lessees. The population in 1901 was 4323, having decreased by 17 per cent. during the previous decade. The net cropped area is 4200 acres, of which 2200 can be irrigated. The income was estimated at Rs. 4100 at settlement, on which a *takolī* of Rs. 2000 was fixed. The zamīndār's income had decreased before the settlement owing to his having granted inferior proprietary rights in 2½ villages. In 1906-07 the revenue demand had been reduced to Rs. 1709 with Rs. 77 for cesses.

Deori-Kishori Zamindari.—This estate is situated in the north-east of the Sākoli tahsīl, adjoining Tirorā and its own subordinate zamīndāris of Sālegaon, Bhāgi and Chichewāda. The Great Eastern Road passes through it and Deorī is connected by a fair-weather road with Amgaon station, 23

miles distant. The area of Deorī-Kishorī, excluding the sub-zamīndāris, is 27 square miles. The estate having been confiscated from Chimnā Patel together with the Kāmtha zamīndāri was made over to Narbad Lodhī with Kāmtha in 1818, and is at present held by Indrarāj Bhau, zamīndār of Kāmtha. Prior to Mr. Napier's settlement (1901) scarcely any *takolī* was assessed on Deorī, the zamīndār collecting nearly the whole sum assessed from the sub-zamīndāris. But on this occasion it was decided that the whole *takolī* assessed on the sub-zamīndāris should be paid to Government, and a moderate demand was imposed on Deorī as well. The estate therefore now obtains no direct benefit from the sub-zamīndāris. It consists of 11 villages, of which 3 are held by inferior proprietors, 3 by lessees and 5 are managed direct. The population in 1901 was 2360, having decreased by 13 per cent. during the previous decade. The cropped area was 2400 acres in 1906-07, of which about half is capable of irrigation. The income taken at settlement was Rs. 2900, on which a *takolī* of Rs. 1000 was assessed. The *takolī* was thus only 35 per cent. of the assets, being fixed at a low proportion to compensate for the loss of profits from the sub-zamīndāris. After settlement Sālegaon, which had been alienated, was merged in Deorī, the full *kāmil-jamā* being assessed on it. In 1906-07 the demand for land revenue from Sālegaon and Deorī was Rs. 1470 and for cesses Rs. 68. The combined demand has been reduced since the settlement when it was Rs. 1725.

Dhiwara —A village in the Tirorā tahsīl on the Waingangā river, just south of the railway line and 24 miles from Bhandāra. In the Waingangā opposite Dhiwāra stands an old temple of Narsingh which is much venerated locally and continually visited. A small fair is held here on the last day of Kārtik (October-November). The temple is visible from the railway.

Dighori.—A village in the Sākoli tahsīl, about 28 miles south-west of Bhandāra and 14 miles south of Sākoli. The

river Chūlband passes within a mile of the village. Its area is more than 3000 acres and the population decreased from 3100 in 1891 to 2600 in 1901. The village formerly belonged to the Bhonsla Rānī Bakā Bai and was known as 'Bai Sāhib kī Dighorī.' It has now passed to Lakshman Rao Bhonsla. There are some tanks here in which a good deal of *singhāra* is grown and the double-cropped area is large, wheat, gram and pulses being raised in the moist fields after the rice harvest. The village has some trade in timber. The Mehrās of the place have a bad reputation for thieving. Dighorī has a boys' primary school and a post office.

Dongarli Zamindari.—This estate consists of only one village about 4 miles from Birsolā station. Its area is 1934 acres and population 665 persons. The village was granted by the Bhonsla Rājā to a Rājput for settlement before 1800 A. D. The proprietors have usually been absentees. The present representative is Sītā Bai, widow of Tikarām Singh. She has other property in Bālāghāt. The income at settlement was found to be Rs. 1400, on which a *takolī* of Rs 500 was imposed.

Gaikhuri Range.—A range of hills running from the east of Bhandāra town to the railway near Gondia. It may be generally described as a cluster of low peaks surrounded by irregular forest country. Towards the centre it attains a width of about five miles and the forest is dense. Bison are occasionally found on these hills. The peak of Khairā to the north of the range attains an elevation of 2000 feet.

Gaimukh.—A small village in the Bhandāra tahsīl, 20 miles north of Bhandāra and 2 miles from Ambāgarh. It is so called because a spring issues from the rocks here with an invisible source, and the name Gaimukh or cow's mouth is usually applied to such springs, the form of a cow's mouth being sometimes carved out of the rock. The water is supposed to come from a tank two miles away. A fair is held at the place on the day of Shivrātri in March, lasting for a

fortnight. The attendance has risen as high as 50,000 persons. A number of shops are opened for the sale of brass vessels and hardware. The village belongs to the Yado Rao estate.

Gangajhari Zamindari.—This estate is situated in the Tirorā tahsīl, to the east of Tirorā and adjoining the railway, Gangājharī being 8 miles from Tirorā. It contains seven villages and has an area of 18 square miles. It was a subordinate zamīndāri of Warad, but at Mr. Napier's settlement the zamīndār was permitted, in accordance with his expressed desire, to pay the *takolī* direct to Government. The Marāthā administration at one time treated with its owner direct, and when and for what reason the change was made is not recorded. The zamīndārs are two Pardhāns, Daulat Bāpu and Nūtan Bāpu; the former, the lambardār, is an old gentleman of good business habits and excellent manners and is very popular with the Gonds who form the bulk of his tenants. He is somewhat indebted. The population in 1901 was only 607 persons, and the net cropped area is under 900 acres. The greater part of the estate is covered by forest, and, since the construction of the railway, this has become a valuable asset. During the currency of the 30 years' settlement, the assessment on the zamīndār's private forests increased from Rs. 175 to Rs. 1000, under the system of triennial revision then practised. At last settlement the *takolī* was fixed at Rs. 1300, the income being about Rs. 3400. In 1906-07 the demand for land revenue was Rs. 1100 and for cesses Rs. 56. Gangājhari is a railway station and has a school.

Garhvi River.—(The Ass.) A river which rises in the Chīchgarh zamīndāri, and draining the south-eastern portion of the District, passes into Chānda to join the Waingangā a few miles below Armorī. It is fed by streams issuing from the Partābgarh hills and soon attains a considerable size; it flows between low clay banks and in the rains has a wide stretch of water, long pools of which remain during the hot months. The legend as to its name runs that the river

issued from the earth at the prayer of Garga Rishi, but the waters flowing sluggishly, the holy man grew irate and snouted in a rage ' Begone thou she-ass (gārhvi)'; so ever afterwards the river has borne the name alike of Gārhvi and of Gārgi—a combination which would doubtless disturb the choleric saint if he only knew it.[1] The total length of the river is 60 miles, of which about 36 lie within the Bhandāra District. It is also known as the Itia Do.

Gondia.—A village in the Tirorā tahsīl, situated in 21° 28′ North and 80° 13′ East, on the Bengal-Nāgpur railway, 81 miles from Nāgpur and 601 from Bombay. Gondia is the junction for the new Sātpurā narrow-gauge railway which runs to Jubbulpore across the Sātpurā plateau. A new branch line from Gondia to Brahmapurī and Chānda is at present (1907) under construction. It is the fifth railway station from Bhandāra Road and 42 miles east of it. The population in 1901 was 4457 persons as against 2770 in 1891. The town stands close to the railway station and is well laid out, with two main roads. The greater part of it is situated on Government land and the rents of this are credited to a fund for sanitary purposes which is supplemented by a house-tax. The receipts of the fund are about Rs. 2000 annually. Considerable progress has been made with a drainage scheme. Gondia is a notified area under the Municipal Act. The total area of Gondia village is 1430 acres of which 150 are *nazūl* or Government land. It is one of the two leading goods stations in Bhandāra, receiving the produce of the surrounding area of Bhandāra and of the lowlands of the adjoining Bālāghāt District. The town has a considerable trade in grain and forest produce, and a large weekly market is held on Tuesdays. A further rapid development in the importance of Gondia may be expected in the future. Many Cutchī and Mārwāri Baniā traders and Kirār petty dealers reside here. A severe outbreak of

[1] Major Lucie-Smith's Chānda Settlement Report, pages 19, 20.

plague occurred in 1906-07. There is a bench of Honorary Magistrates and a sub-registration office is shortly to be opened. The town has a post office, a police Station-house, a dispensary and Hindī and Marāthī primary schools. A station of the Methodist Episcopal Mission is in existence here. The proprietor is a Ponwār Rājput.

Gond-Umri Zamindari.—This estate lies in the centre of the Sākoli tahsīl to the south of the Great Eastern Road. Its area is 28 square miles, about half of which is covered by forest. The forests at Kaolīwāra contain good timber. The estate is said to date from the time of Nizām Shā, the Gond Rājā of Mandlā (*circa* 1751 A.D.) and the family are Kanaujia Brāhmans. One story is that it was granted on a lease for bringing it under cultivation, and another that Shankar, the founder of the family, wrested it by force from the previous Gond possessor. This Shankar lived in the time of Raghujī I. and a *sanad* dated 1775 A.D. conferring the estate on him was formerly in possession of the family. The present zamīndār, Jai Nārāyan, is well-to-do and has a large business in lending grain and money. He is about 40 years of age and lives at Gond-Umrī, 10 miles from Sākoli. The zamīndāri contains 10 villages, of which 2 are held by inferior proprietors. The population was 3150 in 1901, and the density 112 persons per square mile. The cropped area is 2500 acres, of which 1200 acres are irrigated. The ordinary income of the estate is about Rs. 5000 and the *takolī* with cesses Rs. 2100.

Jam.—A village in the Bhandāra tahsīl, 20 miles north-west of Bhandāra and situated on the road from Tumsar to Rāmtek. Its area is 2800 acres and the population in 1901 was about 2400 persons as against 2900 in 1891. The name is derived from that of the guava tree. A number of Marārs reside here and grow vegetables with well-irrigation, as ginger, potatoes and earth-nuts, and there are also some sugarcane gardens. There is a cotton hand-weaving industry. Some difficulty is experienced in obtaining water and

wells are dug in a shallow stream which flows by the village. A fund amounting to about Rs. 200 annually is raised for sanitary purposes. The village has a primary school and a post office. It is owned by a Marāthā.

Jambhli Zamindari.—This estate is situated in the north-west of the Sākoli tahsīl and has an area of 15 square miles, of which three-fourths is forest. *Sāj* is the principal timber tree. The zamīndārs are Rāj-Gonds and their tenure is believed to date from the time of the Mandlā kings. The present representative is Tukārām, a man of about 40 years of age who lives at Jambhlī, 10 miles from Sākoli. He can read and write Marāthī, and is heavily involved in debt. The estate consists of four villages, of which two are leased. A fourth of the estate has been foreclosed by Rao Bahādur Yādava Rao. The income at settlement was taken to be Rs. 1300, including apparently the alienated share. A *takolī* of Rs. 375 was fixed on the portion of the estate left in the zamīndār's possession and on the part alienated the full demand of Rs. 185 was assessed. In 1906-07 the revenue demand was Rs. 560 with Rs. 31 for cesses. The case of the estate was taken up in the recent conciliation proceedings[1] and the mortgage debt of Rs. 1342 was reduced to Rs. 932 and made payable by easy instalments.

Kamtha Zamindari.—This fine estate lies in the north-east of the Tirorā tahsīl in an open, fertile country. It is situated to the south of the Waingangā between Amgaon on the east and Warad on the west. The total area is 288 square miles and it contains 128 villages. The soil is moderately fertile, consisting very largely of a sandy loam, generally cropped with rice and bearing second crops in favourable years. On the banks of the Waingangā and Bāgh some rich black soil is found. Gondia is within the zamīndāri and is connected with its headquarters, Phulchur, by a metalled road. The

Description.

[1] See para. 105.

estate is traversed by the Bengal-Nāgpur railway and the Sātpurā branch line and by the Gondia-Arjunī and Gondia-Bālāghāt roads.

History.

The present zamīndāri only includes a part of the old estate, all the subordinate zamīndāris having been separated from it.

The first proper settlement was made in about 1750 A.D. by a Kunbī cultivator, who was given a grant of land here on a quit-rent of Rs. 60. Gradually the borders of his estate extended until it included all the zamīndāris of the Tirorā tahsīl, Hattā, Kirnāpur and Bhādra in the Bālāghāt District, and Deorī-Kishorī in the Sākoli tahsīl. This large property was however split up partly among members of the founder's family and partly among outsiders. In 1818 Chimnā, the manager of the Kāmtha tāluka, foolishly sided with Appa Sāhib in his rebellion and apparently involved all his family in his own disgrace, except the branches which held Amgaon and Pālkhedā; and the whole estate with these exceptions was lost to the family, though subsequently they were given Kirnāpur and some villages for their maintenance. Kāmtha, Hattā and Deorī-Kishorī were entrusted for mangement for two years to Narbad Patel, a Lodhi of no special family, who three years earlier had been given the zamīndāri of Warad. Two years later the estates were handed over to him entirely at the suggestion of Major Wilkinson, but whether any conditions were made at the time is not known, as even at the 30 years' settlement the papers concerning the transaction were not forthcoming. Narbad Lodhī was succdeeed by his eldest son Dewāji in 1826, but he died childless in 1827 and was succeeded by his brother Gajī. The son of the latter, Yashwant Rao, succeeded in 1838 and it was with him and his brother Jijobā that settlement was made in 1867. These brothers lived jointly until the year 1877, when by an agreement 16 villages, 11 in Kāmtha and 5 in Warad, were made over to Jijobā free of *takolī* for his maintenance.

Yashwant Rao died in 1885, and was succeeded by his son Indrarāj, commonly called Latāria Bhau, and as he was a minor the estate was managed by the Court of Wards until the year 1894. Jijobā died in 1896, but just before his death adopted a son Sūraj Lāl, much to the disgust of his nephew who expected to succeed. Everything comes, however, to him who waits, and just as Indrarāj Bhau was preparing to sue to have the adoption set aside, Sūraj Lāl, a boy of about 8 years old, died rather suddenly in the year 1899. Indrarāj Bhau has shown his public spirit by a liberal donation of Rs. 55,000 to the Bhandāra water-works and has been rewarded by Government with the title of Rao Bahādur. He has also been given powers as an Honorary Magistrate but does not exercise them. He is 32 years of age (1907), knows a little English, and lives at Phulchur, 22 miles from Tirorā.

Resources and revenue.

The population in 1901 was 82,941 persons, having decreased by 11 per cent. during the previous decade. The density is 288 persons per square mile. Of the total area 61 per cent. was occupied for cultivation in 1906-07 and 98,000 acres were cropped. Second crops were grown on 41,000 acres and 47,000 are stated to be capable of irrigation. Of the total of 128 villages, 64 are held by inferior proprietors, 23 by lessees and 41 are managed direct. The inferior proprietors are mainly Ponwārs and these are the best cultivators. There are also a number of Kunbis, many of them relatives of the old zamīndār Chimnā or Chimnā Bahādur, as he is locally called. The Kunbis, Mr. Napier says, are bad landlords and are generally indebted. At settlement the zamnīdār's income was found to be Rs. 1·09 lakhs, on which a *takolī* of Rs. 51,000 or 47 per cent. was imposed. The cesses amounted to Rs. 4300 at settlement, but have since been reduced to Rs. 2700. The estate contains 15 schools.

Kamtha Village.—A village in the Tirorā tahsīl, about 60 miles north-east of Bhandāra and 34 miles from Tirorā,

which gave its name to the large Kāmtha zamīndāri. The zamīndār of Kāmtha resides here in the summer months. The population was 1400 persons in 1901 as against more than 1700 in 1891. There is an old temple here 20 feet square, and a small fort. An inscription with a figure of a Chamār's *rāmpi* or cutting instrument on a black stone stands by a house in the village. The fort here was stormed by the British in 1818. It was repaired when the estate was under the management of the Court of Wards. Up to the time of the 30 years' settlement Kāmtha was the headquarters of the eastern tahsil of the District, comprising the parganas of Dhansuā, Rāmpailī and Lānji. At a distance of about a mile to the north is the fine Jhilmilī tank, and the small stream of the Pangolī flows past the town to the east. A circular cistern fed by a natural spring supplies drinking water to the residents. Iron nut-cutters and leather shoes are made here. The village has a primary school and a post office.

Kanhargaon Zamindari.—This diminutive estate consists of one village of 12 persons, all of whom appear to belong to the zamīndāri family. It is situated near the southern border of the Sākoli tahsīl, 26 miles from Sākoli. It is said to have been conferred six generations before 1819 on a Rājput called Bhikrai for killing two tigers. Only about 50 acres are cropped. A *takolī* of Rs. 90 was assessed at settlement, which has now been reduced to Rs. 70 with Rs. 4 as cesses. The family are Rājputs and the present zamīndār, Sampat Bāpu, is about 35 years old. He owed Rs. 1400, but in the conciliation proceedings Rs. 500 were wiped out and the balance made payable by instalments.

Kardi.—A village in the Tirorā tahsīl, 14 miles north-east of Bhandāra and 12 miles south-west of Tirorā. Its area is 3000 acres and the population in 1901 was 2100 persons as against nearly 3000 in 1891. A large proportion of the residents are cotton-weavers and the village is no longer prosperous. Glass bangles are also made. The

village has a primary school and a weekly market is held on Fridays. The proprietor is Gangādhar Rao Chitnavīs.

Kati.—A village in the Tirorā tahsīl with an area of nearly 2700 acres and a population of 1400 persons in 1901 as against 2000 in 1891. The railway station of Birsolā, 10 miles from Gondia on the Sātpurā extension, is situated in the land of Kāti. A large cattle-market is held here on Sundays, to which buffaloes are brought for sale from Mandlā and Rewah. Other articles sold are *gur* or unrefined sugar from Bālāghāt, bamboos from Hattā zamīndāri, tobacco and country shoes. The village consists of seven hamlets situated at a distance from each other, and the supply of water is inadequate. It has a primary school and is owned by a Ponwār.

Khairi Zamindari.—This small estate is situated in the north of the Sākoli tahsīl, a few miles north of Sākoli. It consists of 4 villages and has an area of 14 square miles, of which three-quarters are forest. The estate is said to have been granted to the ancestor of the present Māna family as a reward for the destruction of wild beasts. It may originally have been a part of Turmāpuri, the zamīndārs of which are also Mānas. In a grant dated 1775 it was confirmed to the holders by the Nāgpur Rājā on an annual payment of Rs. 38. The present zamīndār is Anant Rām Māna, a man of about 55 years of age; he lives at Dhanorī, 14 miles from Sākoli, is illiterate, and was heavily indebted. During the recent conciliation proceedings his debts were reduced from Rs. 6600 to Rs. 3900 and he sold the village of Gīdalpār to pay them off and clear himself. The zamīndār is addicted to drink. Two of the four villages belong to inferior proprietors and one is leased. The assets were taken at settlement to be nearly Rs. 1600, on which a *takolī* of Rs. 550 was assessed, allowance being made for the fact that the zamīndār has to clear a fire line in the adjoining Government forest and repair a forest road. The income is now estimated at Rs. 1350. In 1906-07 the revenue demand was Rs. 540 with Rs. 29 for cesses.

Khajri Zamindari.—This small estate lies north of Arjunī between the Chūlband and the Gondia road. It consists of only two villages with an area of 4300 acres, and a population of 1300 persons. It was granted by Bakht Buland of Deogarh to Amar Singh, Kiledār of the Partābgarh fort, and confirmed to his grandson by Raghujī Rao. The present zamīndār, Ambar Bāpu, is about 34 years of age and is illiterate. He is heavily indebted and lives at Khajrī, 18 miles from Sākoli. During the conciliation proceedings his debts were reduced to Rs. 1800 and made payable by instalments. The income at settlement was estimated at Rs. 2000, on which a *takolī* of Rs. 600 was fixed. This had been reduced in 1906-07 to Rs. 505 with Rs. 23 for cesses. A large tank has recently been constructed here on the grant-in-aid system.

Kibmaro.—A small village 3 miles south-west of Bhandāra on the Waingangā river with a population of about 400 persons. On a hillock near the village is an old temple constructed of large blocks of stone with a low verandah in front. An undeciphered inscription formerly existed on the front inner wall, but this has now been plastered over and it is no longer visible. On the side of the hill south of the village and about a mile and a half distant is a cave temple with a figure of Mahādeo in it. The entrance to the cave is only large enough for a man to creep in, but in the inner chamber one can stand upright. The people of the neighbourhood frequently resort to the place for worship. The name of the village is possibly derived from that of the Kuramwār shepherds who may have founded it.

Lakhni.—A large village in the Sākoli tahsīl, situated on the Great Eastern Road 13 miles from Bhandāra and about midway between that place and Sākoli. Its area is more than 2000 acres and the population was 2600 persons in 1901 as against 2900 in 1891. The village is so called because lac bangles are manufactured here, but the industry has somewhat declined. Glass bangles are also made, and a

weekly market is held on Tuesdays. The village contains a primary school, a post office and a police outpost. The proprietor is a Muhammadan.

Mahagaon Zamindari.—This estate is situated in the south of the Sākoli tahsīl bordering the Chānda District. Its area is 31 square miles. The founder of the family was a Ponwār Rājput who came from Mālwā and rose to the post of leader of 2000 horse in the service of the Gond Rājā Bakht Buland (1700 A.D.). He was given a grant of land for suppressing a recalcitrant zamīndār in Tirorā, and the family is said subsequently to have held Lānji, which was surrendered to the Bhonsla Government in exchange for Mahāgaon. The zamīndārs held *sanads* from the Nāgpur Government and some *tākids* or injunctions formerly existed, which were given by Captain Wilkinson in 1822 and 1826 and conferred on the Iamīndār the privilege of imposing fines up to Rs. 5 and of levying a tax up to Rs. 15 on the re-marriage of widows. n 1840 a deed was granted by the Nāgpur Rājā, conferring the estate on Kewal Rām, the then holder, on the rule of primogeniture. The present zamīndār is Jaimal Singh. He is about 40 years of age and lives at Mahāgaon 24 miles from Sākoli. He owes about Rs. 1400 which has been made payable by easy instalments. The estate contains 14 villages, of which one is held by an inferior proprietor, one is leased and the remainder are managed by the zamīndār. A large tank has recently been constructed at Mahāgaon on the grant-in-aid system. The population in 1901 was 1998 persons, having decreased by 13 per cent. during the previous decade. The greater part of the zam īndāri is forest land, but there is not much valuable timber. The cropped area in 1906-07 was 1700 acres. The annual income was taken at Rs. 3700 at settlement and is now said to be about Rs. 3000. In 1906-07 the demand for land revenue and cesses was Rs. 1500.

Mohali.—(Mohāri.) A village in the Bhandārā tahsīl, 12 miles north of Bhandāra on the Tumsar road. Its area

is about 600 acres and the population was 4100 in 1901 as against 5000 in 1891. The place has a reputation for turbulence. A large number of weavers reside here and produce silk-bordered cloths, women's *sāris* being the staple commodity of Mohāli. Coarse cloths, mats and carpets are also woven and dyed. Markets are held on Sundays and Thursdays at which the cloths are sold. The Mārwāris of the place have erected a handsome temple. The village has a vernacular middle school, a police outpost and a branch post office. A fund of about Rs. 500 is raised annually for sanitary purposes. The proprietor is a Kalār.

Mundhri.—A village in the Tirorā tahsīl situated on the Waingangā river, 12 miles north-east of Bhandāra and 14 miles from Tirorā. In 1901 its population was 2100 and had decreased by 100 since 1891. A large cattle and timber market is held here on Tuesdays, teak, *sāj* and bamboos being brought for sale. Bamboo baskets and matting and earthen pots are also made in the village. Mundhrī has a primary school, a post office and a police outpost. The nearest railway station is Tumsar Road, at a distance of 6 miles. Gangādhar Rao Chitnavīs is proprietor of the village.

Murmari.—A village in the Sākoli tahsīl 12 miles east of Bhandāra near Lākhnī. There is here the tomb of an English lady, the wife of a Major Claye Watson, who died in 1831 or 1851, the inscription being indistinct. The tomb was until recently worshipped by the people of the neighbourhood under the name of *kabar*, tomb, or *dewal*, shrine, and offerings were made to it. The practice has however now ceased.

Nagra.—A village in the Tirorā tahsīl about 3 miles from Gondia station on the Bālāghāt road with a population of about 2700 persons. The village is an old one and is surrounded by the remains of a moat. There is a curious old temple of Mahādeo here, and round it are a number of small wells lined with earthenware and so narrow that only one bucket can be worked at a time in each. According to

tradition Nāgra was a settlement of the Gaolīs when the whole surrounding country was dense forest. The proprietor of the village is a Lodhī.

Nansari Zamindari.—This small estate lies to the north of Amgaon on the bank of the Bāgh river adjoining Bālāghāt. The estate was given to a Marāthā Brāhman in 1814, and the family were afterwards Kamaishdārs of Lānji. There are two share-holders at present, Vināyak Rao, who is 60 years old and lives at Manerī in Bālāghāt, and Msst. Sakhu Bai, a widow, who has three grandsons, Rāmchandra Rao, a boy of 22 years of age, and two others. The family are heavily indebted, chiefly owing to litigation. The population in 1901 was 4539, having decreased by 21 per cent. during the previous decade. The net cropped area is 5000 acres. Three villages are held by inferior proprietors and three by lessees. The income of the zamīndāri at settlement was taken at Rs. 5000, of which Vināyak Rao received Rs. 3000 and Sakhu Bai Rs. 2000. A *takolī* of Rs. 1000 was assessed on the former and of Rs. 700 on the latter.

Nawegaon.—(Commonly known as Nawegaon Bāndh.) A village in the Sākoli tahsīl about 16 miles south-east of Sākoli. Nawegaon is a station on the narrow-gauge Gondia-Brahmapurī railway now under construction, and is 40 miles by rail from Gondia. Its area is more than 7000 acres and the population in 1901 was 2400 persons as against 1750 in 1891. The village contains the well-known Nawegaon tank or lake, the largest in the Bhandāra District. The tank has a circumference of about 17 miles and a water-surface of about 5 square miles. The average depth is said to be 40 feet, increasing in places to 90 feet. Water is taken from the tank through sluices in irrigation channels and is distributed to five villages. The area irrigated is said to be about 2500 acres. The tank is surrounded by hills showing eight distinct peaks, and numerous streams pour their waters into this rocky basin, which is closed by two embankments 110 and 748 yards in length respectively. The

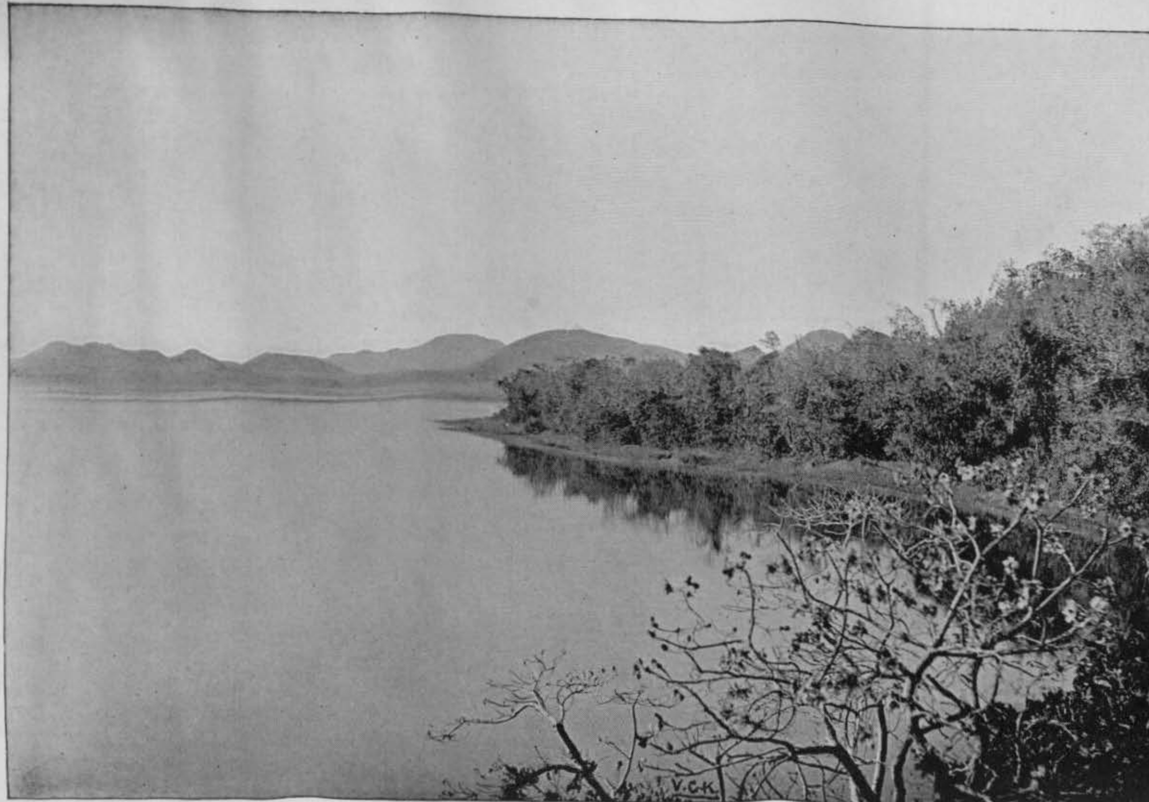


Photo Etching, Roorkee College.

SIDE VIEW OF NAWEGAON TANK FROM THE HILL.

shape of the tank is very irregular, running into long creeks behind the hills, but the short lengths of the embankment show how well the site was selected. The tank is said to have been built by Kolū Patel Kohlī at the commencement of the eighteenth century at a cost of Rs. 64,000. Kolū Patel has apparently been deified as Kolāsur Deo and his shrine is on one of the peaks surrounding the tank. The other peaks are known as the Sāt Bahinī or 'Seven Sisters' and it is said that these deities assisted Kolū in building the tank, by coming and working on the embankment at night when the labourers had left. Some whitish-yellow stones on Kolāsur hill are said to be the baskets of the Seven Sisters in which they carried earth, and the smaller length of bank which sustains the greatest pressure of water is believed to be their handiwork. On the bank of the tank is a statue of Hanumān, the deity of strength, whose feet are believed to go underground into the embankment. An island in the centre is known as Māldongri and it is related that when the Pindāris came on their raids the people of the village used to put off to the island with their property and taking all the boats with them so that the Pindāris could not reach them. A stone pillar standing in the village is called Bālajī's column and figures of deities are carved on it. Nawegaon contains a police Station-house, a dispensary, a post office and a primary school. A room in the Station-house affords accommodation for inspecting officers. The proprietor of the village is a Kohlī.

Palasgaon Zamindari.—(Partābgarh pargana.) This estate is situated in the Sākoli tahsīl, lying between Nawegaon lake and the Chīchgarh zamīndāri. The area is 72 square miles, of which three-fourths are under forest. The forests contain teak, *sāj* and *biulā* timber and bamboos in fairly large quantities. The estate is said first to have been conferred by the Mandlā Rājā as a reward for the apprehension of some dacoits, and the tenure was confirmed by Raghujī Bhonsla on an annual payment of Rs. 10. The family are Halbās by caste. Ganpat Thākur is the present head of

the family and manages its affairs with discretion. He has spent money on improving roads for the traffic from his forests and has built a fine tank. The zamīndāri contains 13 villages, of which two are held by inferior proprietors. The population in 1901 was 1356 and the density is only 18 persons per square mile. The area in cultivation has increased largely since the 30 years' settlement, but even now forms only 6 per cent. of the total. The cropped area is 1800 acres, of which 500 are irrigated. The zamīndār's income was taken at settlement at Rs. 4000, of which four-fifths were derived from forest receipts. The *takolī* fixed at settlement was Rs. 1000 but has been reduced to Rs. 965, and the cesses are Rs. 50.

Palasgaon Zamindari.—(Sāngarhī pargana.) This strange zamīndāri contains only two villages, Palāsgaon and Piprī, both of which are held by inferior proprietors, though the zamīndār has a good deal of absolute occupancy land in Palāsgaon. They are situated on the Chūlband stream. There is a fine tank in Palāsgon. The estate seems to have been first granted to the present Rājput family by Nizām Shā, Rājā of Mandlā (1751 A.D.). It was confirmed by Raghuji I and there was a letter extant at the 30 years' settlement from Jānoji Bhonsla to the zamīndār, calling on him to loot the Peshwā's army. The present zamīndār is Hīra Singh, a man about 45 years old, who is indebted to the extent of about Rs. 1500. The income was Rs. 540 at settlement of which Rs. 280 was assessed as *takolī*, while Rs. 16 are now payable for cesses.

Palkheda Zamindari.—This estate lies in the south-east of the Tirorā tahsīl, bordering Sākoli. Pālkhedā is 10 miles from Gondia station. Its area is 41 square miles and it contains 21 villages. There is a good deal of hilly wooded country. The family are descended from Deo, fifth son of Kolū Patel, the founder of Kāmtha. The present zamīndār is Souā Bāpu, a man about 35 years old. The estate was heavily indebted when he succeeded to it and four villages have been

sold to the zamīndār's brothers-in-law. It was for some period under the management of the Court of Wards. The four villages sold are Kalpathrī, Girdhāri, Pālewāda and Tillī and their area is 13 square miles. The population of the zamīndāri in 1901 was 7293 persons and the cropped area was 9000 acres. The zamīndār has only the one village of Pālkhedā under direct management. Four other villages are held by his relations in full right, the zamīndār receiving from them the whole *kāmil-jamā*. Twelve other villages are held by inferior proprietors and four by lessees. The zamīndār's income was taken at Rs. 5500 at settlement, on which a *takolī* of Rs. 3000 was assessed with Rs. 2410, the full *kāmil-jamā* on the alienated villages. The cesses amount to about Rs. 300.

Pangoli River.—A river which rises in the village of Tārha in the south of the Tirorā tahsil and flows north to join the Bāgh near Kāmtha on the border of the District. It is crossed by the Bengal-Nāgpur railway a little above Phulchur. The total length is 44 miles.

Partabgarh Range.—The Partābgarh or Nawegaon hills lie in the south-east of the District and form its highest part. Among them under a seven-peaked mass, known locally as the hill of the Seven Sisters, is the Nawegaon lake, and on an outlying bluff of this cluster stood the old fortress of Partābgarh (1842 feet). The peak of Nishāni is 2,314 feet high.

Partabgarh (Pratapgarh) Village.—A small village with a hill-fort about 40 miles south-east of Bhandāra, with a population of 37 persons. The name is a corruption of Pratāpgarh, 'The fort of victory.' The elevation of the hill is 1842 feet, and the fort on its summit, now in ruins, is believed to have been erected by the Gonds. The fort was afterwards held by Rāj Khān, the Pathān Dīwān of Seonī, under Bakht Buland, Rājā of Deogarh. The hill forms an outlying bluff of the cluster known as the Nawegaon or Partābgarh range. The height of the hill and the singularity of its shape makes it a prominent feature in the landscape and hence in accordance with the usual practice in the case of striking

natural objects, it became at an early period a place of worship among the primitive people of the locality. The legend connected with it is to the effect that a man-eating demon had taken up his abode on the hill, and from this position of vantage he was accustomed to watch the country below and to snatch up for a meal any ill-fated persons who passed that way. But finally a Muhammadan holy man came and dwelt at the foot of the hill, and, on being attacked by the demon, vanquished and destroyed him after a battle lasting seven days. The name of 'The house of Victory' was given to the hill after the building erected by the holy man in commemoration of the event, this being made over to the Gond Rājā of the locality for safe custody. The tomb of the saint, Usmān Walī, is on the side of the hill. In a deep cave in the hillside is a shrine of Mahādeo, and a fair is held here in his honour on the day of Shivrātri in February or March, lasting for three days. The attendance is about 10,000 persons, most of whom are Mahārs from Bhandāra and the neighbouring Districts and from Berār. The story of the saint and the demon is an interesting example of the way in which an immigrant religion appropriates to itself the shrines and festivals of a lower one already existing. There is little reason to doubt that the hill was originally worshipped by the Mahārs and other primitive tribes as the abode of a demon, and that the Muhammadan priests presented the locality with the story of the saint, probably at the time when Rāj Khān, the Pathān Dīwān of Seonī, lived at Sāngarhī. But again when the Muhammadan power was removed, and Hinduism was restored as the faith of the local governors, a shrine of Mahādeo was established in the cave and this has now become the object of pilgrimage of the Mahārs and others, whose original veneration of the place is due to the commanding appearance and position of the hill itself.

Position and size.

Pauni (Pohoni) Town.—A walled town in the Bhandāra tahsil, situated in 20° 48′ North and 79° 39′ East, on the Waingangā

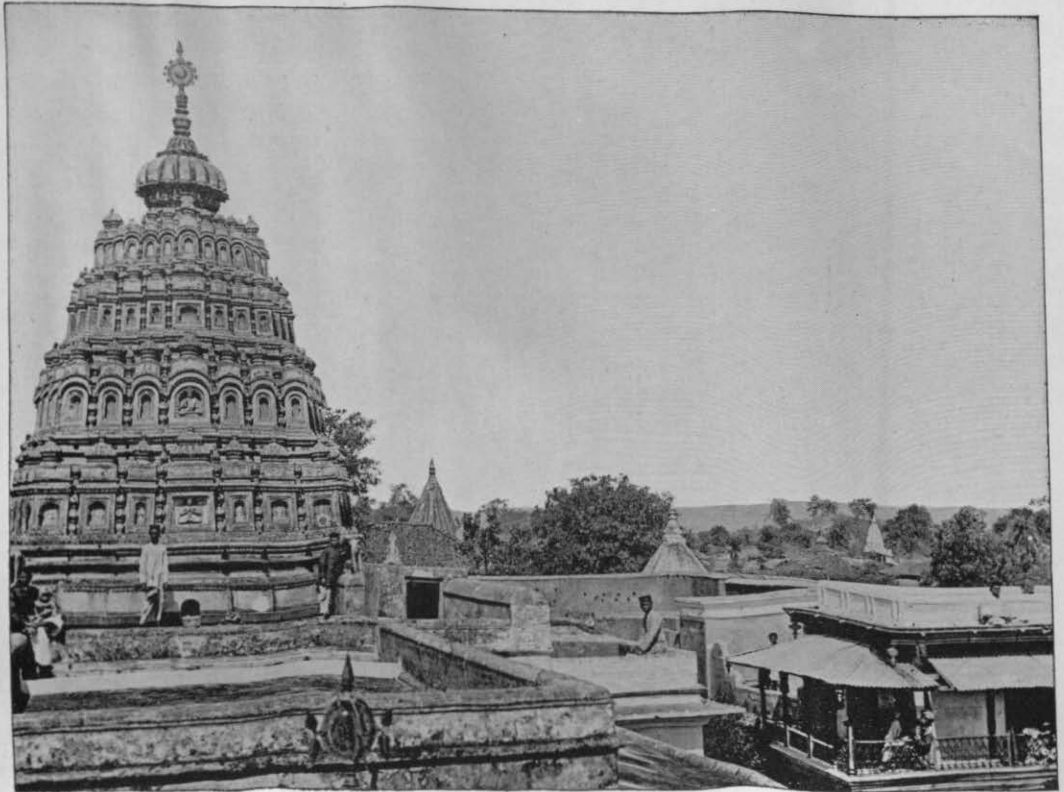


Photo. Etching, Roorkee College.

THE TEMPLE OF MURLIDHAR AT PAUNI

river, 32 miles south of Bhandāra by road. Paunī will not be on the new Gondia-Brahmapuri narrow-gauge railway, but there is a proposal to construct a branch line to it from Bhiwāpur. It extends over an area of 2100 acres, of which 94 acres are Government land. The population in the last four years of census was as follows:—*1872*, 8973; *1881*, 9773; *1891*, 9870; *1901*, 9366. The population in 1901 included 906 Muhammadans.

Local legends.

Paunī is an old town and was well peopled when the greater part of the District was an impenetrable wilderness. The name is derived from the mythical king Pawan, after whom Pohnā and Paunār in Wardhā and Powanghar in Berār are also called. The town was formerly known as Padmaoti after him or his queen, so that in old times to speak of it as Paunī was to show yourself a newcomer and not one of the old families to whom the name of Padmaoti was still a sacred remembrance. Of king Pawan many miracles are related. His name was derived from *pawan*, the wind, and he left Paunār in the morning to bathe in the Waingangā at Paunī over 100 miles distant, and then went a return journey of 130 miles to Pohnā in the Hinganghāt tahsīl to take his food, after which he returned another 30 miles to Paunār for the night. His wife had the power of walking over tanks supported only by a lotus leaf, and of drawing water in unbaked pots by means of a string that had never been twined. Both she and Pawan himself, though they possessed wealth untold, wore simple white garments, and laboured with their own hands. One account says they were credited with the possession of the philosopher's stone, so that they could, if they so wished, turn their subjects' tribute of iron ore and such like things into silver and gold. But there came a day when Pawan's wife, known as Kamlāpat, the queen of the water-lily, saw the rest of the women going out to celebrate the Polā festival, clad in garments of many colours and with ornaments of gold and silver about their

persons. She too must own such things; and before the next Polā feast came round, by constant importunity, she had induced her lord to let her dress and adorn herself as other women did. She joined the festival, no longer distinguished by the simplicity of her apparel; her eyes were now opened, and she found that her virtue was departed from her. No longer would her untwined string and unbaked pot perform their office; no longer would the leaf of the *kamal* support her steps. The end of it was, that an earthquake followed, that left Paunī upside down. The glory of Pawan had departed, and he soon afterwards fell under the power of the Musalmān invaders.

Description of the town.

The town is surrounded on three sides by a mound of earth and a moat, the walls being in some parts covered with stone battlements. On the fourth side to the east is the scarped bank of the Waingangā. An account of its capture by the British in 1818 is given in the chapter on History. Within the town is a citadel or old fort with walls consisting of loose dressed stones of a large size. This is attributed to the Gaolīs. The gateway and one of the walls of the fort are still standing. Some bathing-ghāts or flights of steps have been constructed on the bank of the Waingangā, the best one being known as the Dīwān Ghāt. There are some temples of fair architecture interspersed with fine trees overlooking the river. The temple of Murlīdhar, however, which is the most important, is comparatively new. It is a handsome and lofty building surrounded by a wall. The town has two large tanks, called Karhāda and Barsamudra.

Municipal statistics and local industries.

Paunī was created a municipality in 1867 and the average municipal receipts are a little more than Rs. 4000, having been nearly stationary for a number of years. The receipts are mainly derived from a property tax. The staple industry of the town is the manufacture of silk-bordered cloths and thread of very fine counts is woven. Some of the finer



Photo-Etching. Roorkee College.

fabrics are exported to great distances. In 1865 Paunī cloths took the first and second prizes at the piece-goods section of the Nāgpur exhibition. The industry is not so prosperous as in former times, and as shown by the figures of population the town is not advancing in importance. Men's loin-cloths are chiefly woven and thread of counts as fine as 80's is employed. A little tasar silk is also spun from the cocoons by Koskātis. There are a number of betel-vine gardens in the environs, and the production of the leaf is greater here than in any place in Bhandāra. *Singhāra* or water-nut (*Trapa bispinosa*) is also grown on the tanks, and the water of the moat, the right to grow it being sold by the municipality and purchased by the Dhīmars acting as a syndicate. The seed is first sown in shallow water and then just before the rains the creepers are taken and planted in water waist-deep, being stamped into the mud with the foot. The plants grow up to the surface in the rains and the fruits appear on the top of the water. Paunī has a vernacular middle school with 225 pupils enrolled in 1905, a Government girls' school and an Urdū school. It also has a dispensary and a police Station-house and an inspection hut has been erected. The proprietors are two Kāyasths.

Phukimeta Zamindari.—This estate lies to the south of Amgaon zamīndāri on the bank of the Bāgh river in the Tirorā tahsīl. It has an area of 9 square miles and contains six villages. The headquarters, Phukimetā, is 6 miles from Amgaon station. The zamīndāri was formerly subordinate to Amgaon, but was separated from it at the recent settlement. It is held by two Ponwārs, Kāshirām and Latkū, who are in the position of well-to-do mālguzārs. The zamīndār's income is about Rs. 2000 and the *takolī* payable is Rs. 825 with Rs. 45 for cesses. The *takolī* was assessed at a higher rate than usual in consequence of the estate having been subordinate to Amgaon.

Phulchur.—A village in the Kāmtha zamīndāri, situated on the Pāngoli stream, 56 miles north-east of Bhandāra

and 3 miles from Gondia station, with which it is connected by a metalled road. The population was 2150 in 1901, having slightly increased during the previous decade. The village derives its importance only from being the residence of the zamīndār of Kāmtha. A weekly cattle-market is held here and it contains a primary school and a post office.

Pohra.—A village in the Sākoli tahsīl on the Great Eastern Road 16 miles south-east of Bhandāra and 3 miles from Lākhni. Its area is 2600 acres and the population was 2500 persons in 1901 as against nearly 3000 in 1891. Vegetables, oranges and guavas are grown by irrigation, and there is a pottery industry. A large cattle-market is held on Thursdays, and besides cattle, grain and chillies are sold and Berār tobacco is brought here by Pinjārās. Pohrā has a primary school and a post office. The proprietor is Kunwar Lakshman Rao Bhonsla.

Purada Zamindari.—This estate is situated in the south-east corner of the Tirorā tahsīl, adjoining Sākoli and the Khairāgarh State. The total area is 38 square miles, the greater part of which is forest, and it contains only 7 villages. The estate was granted in the beginning of the nineteenth century by Chimnāji Bhonsla, on his victorious return from Orissa, to Kāru Gond who had accompanied him. Kāru's great-grandson Lāhu was zamīndār at the 30 years' settlement, and Bīju the present zamīndār is the adopted son of his brother Ganjī. He is 42 years old and lives at Purāda, 49 miles from Tirorā. He has a number of relations who are joint with him and share in the profits of the estate. They are heavily indebted. A branch of the family formerly held the Saolī-Dongargaon estate, which was lost for much less than its real value. The population in 1900 was 3242 persons. Of the seven villages three are held by inferiors proprietors. The zamīndār's income at settlement was found to be Rs. 5000, on which a *takolī* of Rs. 1600 was imposed.

Razoli Zamindari.—This estate is situated in the south-east corner of the Sākoli tahsīl adjoining the Chānda District

It has an area of 50 square miles, the greater part of which is forest. The zamīndāri is held by a Muhammadan family, which is related to the Gewardhā family of Chānda, and the present zamīndārin appeared as a claimant for the Gewardhā zamīndāri. The Rajolī estate is said to have been conferred on the ancestors of the present family about six generations ago for assistance given by them against the Gonds. A grant signed by the Bhonsla Rājā in 1775 stated that it had been held by the family for many years. The family is believed to have been a branch of that of Rāj Khān, the governor of Dongartāl, who held the fort of Sāngarhī in Bhandāra, and granted these estates to some of his relatives. In this case it would be related to the Dīwān family of Seonī Chhapāra. Bahādur Khān and Amīr Khān were brothers and the sons of Amīr Khān got Gewardhā and those of Bahādur Khān, Rajolī. Azmat Khān, son of Bahādur Khān, was the last zamīndār and died childless, leaving two widows, of whom one, Hayāt Bi, survives. Constant litigation, first between the widows, and then about the Gewardhā claim, has left her hopelessly in debt, and the zamīndāri has been mortgaged to Rao Sāhib Rang Rao, pleader of Bhandāra, one village Iddah having been sold to him in full right. Hayāt Bi is 28 years of age and lives at Rajolī, 40 miles from Sākoli. The zamīndāri contains only 14 villages of which 3 are held by inferior proprietors, 5 are leased and 6 are managed direct. The population in 1901 was only 1153 persons. Many fine sites for tanks exist in the zamīndāri if capital was available to construct them. A large tank is being built by Government on the grant-in-aid system. The income was taken at settlement at Rs. 2800, nearly the whole of which was derived from the forests. The *takolī* fixed was Rs. 800, to which Rs. 105, the full assessment of Iddah, was added. In 1906-07 the demand for land revenue and cesses was Rs. 888.

Rampaili.—A village in the Tirorā tahsīl, on the Chandan river, 20 miles north of Tirorā and 48 miles north-

east of Bhandāra, with which it is connected by a metalled road through Tumsar. The population was 1500 persons in 1901 as against 2000 in 1891. The name is derived from *Rāma-pad-awalī*, or the village of Rāma's footstep, and a mark is shown in the rock, which is believed to be the imprint of Rāma's footstep, made on his way to Rāmtek. Three miles away at Deogaon is a tank covered with lotus flowers and here Rāma is supposed to have slain a demon on coming to Rāmpailī. The village has an old temple of Rāma on the Chandan river, the image in which is held to have come out of the sands of the river, the fact of its existence being disclosed to a holy man in a dream. The temple has an endowment of promissory notes. A fair was formerly held here in the month of Kārtik, but this has now stopped. On the Tirorā-Rāmpailī road is a large hill and on its summit stands an old temple of Mahādeo visible from a great distance. The village contains three orange gardens and sugarcane and onions are grown here. It has a primary school and post office. The proprietors are a Muhammadan family.

Sakoli Tahsil.—The southern tahsīl of the District, lying between 20° 41′ and 21° 17′ N. and 79° 43′ and 80° 34′ E. It is bounded on the north by the Tirorā tahsīl, on the east by the Rāj-Nāndgaon State, on the south by the Chānda District and on the west by the Bhandāra tahsīl, from which it is divided by an arbitrary line which cuts the old Paunī pargana into two portions. The area of the tahsīl is 1549 square miles or nearly two-fifths of that of the District. It contains 20 zamīndāri estates with an area of 710 square miles. The most fertile tract lies in the south-west corner, where embanked fields growing wheat and rice are found, as in the Paunī Chauras. Round Lākhnī transplanted rice and also wheat and gram are grown. Down the centre of the tahsīl, almost from the Tirorā boundary to the borders of Chānda, and from Dighorī and Pīpalgaon on the west to Kasbī and Nawegaon on the east, lies the special tank

Description.

country of Bhandāra, the home of the Kohlī caste, and the centre of sugarcane cultivation in past years. Further to the east lie the zamīndāris, mainly jungle tracts, often intersected by hills and almost impassable except to a man on foot. Amidst this jungle are found tracts of considerable fertility and in many villages valuable tanks have been made by the zamīndārs. The worst country is that round Kaoliwāra, Nishāni and Mahsūli, and again between Rajolī and Chīchgarh; this consists almost entirely of hill and forest. The principal river of the tahsīl is the Chūlband.

Population.

The population in 1901 was 167,395 or 25 per cent. of that of the District. In 1891 the population was 178,984 and in 1881, 156,804. The increase between 1881 and 1891 was 14 per cent. and the decrease during the last decade 6½ per cent. The zamīndāris suffered most severely, losing 11 per cent. of their population, as against a decline of under 5 per cent. in the *khālsa* tract. During the last twenty years Sākoli shows better results in respect of population than either of the other two tahsīls, probably because it has a certain area of rice land which can be protected by irrigation even in the worst years, and also because the large area of unoccupied land in the tahsīl has probably induced some immigration from the more populous neighbouring tracts. In 1901 the density of population was 108 persons per square mile, being 147 for the mālguzāri and 61 for the zamīndārī area. There are 614 villages, of which 63 are uninhabited. The tahsīl has no towns. The principal villages are Sāngarhī (population 3189), Dighorī Buzurg (2640), Lākhnī (2581), Pohrā (2533), Nawegaon Bāndh (2397), and Sākoli (2019). Fifteen other villages have a population of more than 1000 persons.

Agriculture.

Of the *khālsa* area 246 square miles or 29 per cent. were occupied by Government forest in 1905-06 and another 285 square miles or 34 per cent. by private forest and grass. In the zamīndāris the forest area was 407 square miles or 57 per

cent. of the total. Of the village area excluding the zamīndāris a proportion of 51 per cent. was occupied for cultivation while in the zamīndāris the proportion was only 18 per cent. of the total. The occupied area is about the same as at last settlement (265,000 acres). The cultivated area in 1905-06 was 226,000 acres. The net cropped area at settlement was 191,000 acres which increased to 193,000 acres in 1905-06. The statistics of cropping at settlement and during the last five years are shown below :—

Statistics of cropping, Sakoli.

Year.	Wheat.	Rice.	Gram.	Linseed.	Kodon-kutki.	Tiurā lākh.	Urad, mūng and moth.	Sugarcane.	Double-cropped area.	Total cropped area (b).	Irrigated area.
At last settlement	(a) 15,013	127,462	7,284	4,686	9,313	...	...	2,365	21,794	213,105	74,057
1900-01 ...	13,101	98,582	9,541	7,953	10,898	10,839	12,664	531	27,238	300,331	52,315
1901-02 ...	14,861	110,796	7,871	9,023	10,761	9,221	10,273	1,305	14,790	199,577	65,000
1902-03 ...	10,563	105,128	11,037	6,172	15,539	8,175	4,306	1,649	13,369	301,249	41,184
1903-04 ...	18,282	110,876	9,110	13,061	11,662	12,990	18,837	927	41,409	231,731	33,794
1904-05 ...	18,835	122,713	10,113	14,723	9,693	15,683	11,886	1,371	38,194	238,675	63,233
1905-06 ...	19,832	116,425	9,712	10,977	8,670	19,758	14,011	1,554	41,584	234,323	70,787
Percentage of area under each crop on the total cropped area in 1905-06.	8	50	4	4	4	8	6	...	...	...	...

(a) Includes wheat-gram.
(b) Includes double-cropped area.

The double-cropped area was 42,000 acres in 1905-06 as against 22,000 at settlement. The area under sugar-cane was only 1600 acres in this year as against 2400 at settlement and 7000 at the 30 years' settlement. But Mr. Napier was of opinion that this last figure was incorrect and that the crop was not really grown on so large an area.

Land Revenue.

The demand for land revenue was Rs. 1·05 lakhs at the 30 years' settlement and fell at 63 per cent. of the assets. It was raised at the recent settlement to Rs. 1·52 lakhs, giving an increase of Rs. 45,000 or 42 per cent. on the revenue immediately prior to revision, and falling at 57 per cent. of the assets. The *kāmil-jamā* estimated for the zamīndāris was Rs. 40,000 and the *takolī* assessed Rs. 24,000. Some reductions have since been made and the demand in 1905-06 was Rs. 1·26 lakhs while the cesses amounted to Rs. 7000 in the same year, excluding those recently remitted.

At the 30 years' settlement the tahsīl was divided into the parganas of Sāngarhī with 274 villages and Partābgarh with 248, while 49 villages were included in the Paunī pargana of the Bhandāra tahsīl and 45 in the Kāmtha pargana of the Tirorā tahsīl for assessment purposes. At last settlement the following assessment groups were formed, the number of villages contained by each being shown in brackets against it:—Nawegaon Bāndh (82), Chīchgarh (53), Deorī (45), Palāndur (60), Gond-Umrī (38), Dallī (56), Sākoli (98), Lākhni (99) and Lakhāndur (87).

The average rent-rate for the tahsīl was R. 0-13-1 and the revenue rate R. 0-10-1. Lākhni is the most highly assessed group with a rent-rate of R. 1-1-1 and Palāsgaon the most lightly assessed with a rate of R. 0-4-2. In *khālsa* the rates for other groups are Nawegaon Bāndh R. 0-15-9, Lakhāndur R. 0-15-7 and Sākoli R. 0-14-2. In the zamīndāris Mahāgaon has the highest rate with R. 0-14-9 and the others pay from R. 0-4-2 to R. 0-12-9.

Miscellaneous.

The tahsīl is divided into three Revenue Inspectors' circles with headquarters at Lākhni, Lakhāndur and Arjunī and into 50 patwaris' circles. It has two police Station-houses with headquarters at Sākoli and Nawegaon and four outposts.

Sakoli Village.—The headquarters of the Sākoli tahsil, 24 miles from Bhandāra on the Great Eastern Road and 62 miles from Nāgpur. The population was just over 2000 in 1901 and had increased by about 100 persons during the previous decade. The word *sākoli* means a bier, and there is a Marāthī saying to the effect that whoever goes to live at Sākoli is likely soon to require the use of one. The place is considered to have a bad climate and to be rather a *locus poenitentiæ* for Government officials. The headquarters of the tahsīl were formerly at Sāngarhī and were removed to Sākoli about 1867, probably on account of its position on the main road. The tahsīl building was originally on the Bālāpur hill about a mile distant from the village, where the inspection bungalow now stands. There are two tanks and some *kathai* sugarcane is grown. The village has little or no trade. Besides the tahsīl buildings it contains a primary school, a police Station-house, a post office and a *sarai*. A weekly market is held on Sundays. An inspection bungalow has been erected on the Bālāpur hill nearly a mile from the village. The proprietor is a Kohlī and most of the tenants are also of this caste.

Salegaon Sub-zamindari.—This estate was a sub-zamīndāri of Deorī-Kishorī in the north-east of the Sākoli tahsil. It has an area of 17 square miles. Prior to the 30 years' settlement Sālegaon was held by a Lodhī zamīndār. Shortly before the settlement he had fallen into arrears with his revenue and was arranging to sell the estate. The tahsīldār of Kāmtha, Ajudhia Prasād, heard of this and induced the zamīndār to sell the estate to him, registering it in the name of his sons. The Chief Commissioner however set aside the sale as contrary to public policy, and called

on the zamīndār of Deorī to pay the purchase money as superior proprietor. This however the zamīndār declined to do, and he gave a lease of the estate to Ajudhia Prasād, whose sons are now perpetual *thekādārs*. The present representative is Lālā Murlidhar, a man of about 40 years of age, who is educated and lives at Nāgpur. He is a Kāyasth and well to do. The estate contains 11 villages, of which one is held by an inferior proprietor, 5 by lessees and 5 are managed direct. The assets at settlement were nearly Rs. 1900, on which a *takolī* of Rs. 725 was assessed. The payments have since been amalgamated with those of Deorī.

Salekasa Zamindari.—This estate is subordinate to the Bijlī zamīndāri. It lies in the east of the Tirorā tahsīl between Bijli and Darekasā. The area is 24 square miles, but the two villages of Mānāgarh and Kolarbhattī, comprising more than half the zamīndāri, have been sold outright and have now been detached from it. A large part of the zamīndāri is forest and it contains some good timber. The family are Gonds, to whom the estate is said to have been given by one of the Bijlī zamīndārs to be brought under cultivation. They are very poor and of no social importance. The estate was under the Court of Wards for a period of 12 years. The present zamīndārs are Jodh Singh and Jai Singh, aged 40 and 20 respectively. They live at Sālekasā, which is a railway station 73 miles from Bhandāra, and has a school and a police outpost. The estate has now only five villages, excluding the two which have been sold. Of these three are held by inferior proprietors. The income of the zamīndārs was found to be Rs. 1050 at settlement, on which a *takolī* of Rs. 520 was imposed, while a full mālguzāri assessment of Rs. 550 was made on the alienated villages. The *takolī* has since been reduced as the cropped area has fallen by nearly 50 per cent. since settlement.

Sangarhi.—A large village in the Sākoli tahsīl, about 9 miles south of Sākoli by a village road and 34 miles south-east of Bhandāra. The population was 3200 persons in

1901, having decreased by 100 during the preceding decade. The village contains the ruins of an old fort erected by the Dīwān family of Seonī, which held the two zamīndāri estates of Gewardhā in Chānda and Rajolī in Bhandāra. The fort was called Sahangarh or the fort of *sahan*, this word meaning the court or small enclosure at the back of a house. It is said that the name was given to the village, because it lay right at the extremity of the pargana to the south-east. An old gun lies imbedded in the sand by the fort, and is worshipped by the people. It is said that a band of Pindāris, who were raiding the village, were dispersed by a charge from this gun, and that its report was so loud that the men who fired it had to jump into a shallow pool of water in order to escape being deafened. It is also believed that whenever this gun is moved the government of the country will be changed. A Bhonsla Rājā tried to remove it with 16 pairs of bullocks, but only succeeded in dragging it a little way. Sāngarhi was formerly the headquarters of the tahsīl which comprised the parganas of Sāngarhī, Partābgarh and Paunī, but it was removed to Sākoli at the 30 years' settlement. There are some old Hindu temples and two *baolīs* or wells with steps. A number of Muhammadans reside here and there are an old mosque and Id-gāh. Country cloth is woven and a market is held on Fridays. The village has a primary school. It is owned by a Marāthā.

Saoli-Dongargaon Estate.—This estate was held at settlement as a subordinate zamīndāri of Amgaon by a family of Gonds related to the zamīndārs of Purāda and Bhāgi. They became heavily involved and sold the estate to one of a family of Kunbīs who had obtained inferior proprietary right in the village of Bāsipār at the 30 years' settlement. This man's name was Ganesh and litigation sprang up between him and the rest of his family over the estate, but the final decision confirmed him as sole proprietor. The present representative is Dāji Bhau Kunbī, and he is related to the well-known Kunbī family of Kāmtha, who now hold the



Kirnāpur zamīndāri of Bālāghāt. At Mr. Napier's settlement the estate was considered to be held on the ordinary mālguzāri tenure and a full assessment was imposed. It has an area of 61 square miles and contains 21 villages. The income at settlement was found to be nearly Rs. 8700, on which a revenue of Rs. 4800 was imposed at the rate of 55 per cent. The principal village, Saolī, has a school and post office.

Seoni.—(Commonly known as Seonī Bāndh.) A small village in the Sākoli tahsīl, 6 miles south of Sākoli, with a population of about 800 persons. The village is only notable as being the site of a large tank second only to Nawegaon in size. The tank is said to have been built by Dādu Patel Kohlī three centuries ago, but it is probably more recent. The Kohlī family had held the village for a long period, but under Bhonsla rule they were ejected and it was made over to Bakā Bai, the dowager Marāthā queen. The tank is six or seven miles round and the water-surface is nearly two square miles. It is surrounded by a circle of hills on three sides, and on the fourth an embankment 630 feet in length has been constructed. The average depth of the tank is said to be about 30 feet. In the summer when it runs low, the trunks of the trees which were submerged at its construction are said still to appear above the water. The shape of the tank is an oval and a great part of it is fringed with forest, the view from the embankment being very picturesque. It affords water to three villages. Seonī belongs to the Bhonsla family.

Sihora.—A village in the Bhandāra tahsīl about 30 miles north-east of Bhandāra on the Tumsar-Rāmpailī road. The population was 2400 persons in 1901, having decreased by about 200 during the previous decade. There is a *baolī* or well with steps in the village and a temple of Mahādeo recently erected. A fairly large tank lies to the south of it. Women's cloths are woven here in black, red and other colours. Sihorā has a primary school and a post office. The proprietors are two Parwār Baniās.

Sukli.—A village in the Tirorā tahsīl, 6 miles south-east of Tirorā, with a population of about 1000 persons. The village is a sacred place of the Mānbhaos, as it is believed that a demon who formerly resided here and troubled the people was slain by Krishna, the principal deity of the sect. The tombs of several Bhope's or Mānbhao priests are situated here and a gathering of members of the sect to the number of some thousands takes place on the last day of Chait (April). Camphor is burnt and cocoanuts broken before the tombs of the saints. The proprietor of the village is a *Baniā*.

Sur River.—A small river which rises in the west of the Rāmtek tahsīl, and after cutting its way through a narrow gorge flows eastward with a very winding course into Bhandāra. It receives the drainage of a large tract of land immediately to the north of Bhandāra and empties itself into the Waingangā only about a mile from that town. The Sūr is remarkable for the shallowness of its bed, the level character of the land immediately on its margin and the fertile properties of this land in producing sugarcane and garden crops. Its length is 30 miles, of which about half lies within the Bhandāra District.

Tilota Khairi.—A small village 24 miles south of Bhandāra. It contains an old cromlech consisting of two upright slabs of stone with a third laid over them. Other cromlechs of the same kind are found in the neighbouring District of Chānda and the people attribute them to the Kuramwār shepherds. This one is known locally as the Giant's *Tilotā* or Frying-pan, the horizontal stone having the appearance of a girdle supported over an oven. And on account of this the village is known as Tilotā Khairī or 'Khairī of the Frying-pan.'

Tirkhedi-Malpuri Zamindari.—This estate of the Tirorā tahsīl consists of two zamīndāris, Tirkhedī situated between the Bāgh river and the Sālekasā and Darekasā estates, and Mālpuri to the south of Phulchur on the borders of the

Sākoli tahsīl. Tirkhedī has an area of 15 square miles and contains 7 villages. Most of the area is hilly but the villages along the Bāgh are good ones. Mālpuri has an area of 21 square miles and has 7 villages. Much of it is forest, yielding a considerable profit. The estates have always been held together and were granted to Pāndu Ponwār in 1815 as a reward for loyalty to the Marāthā Government, when the Ponwār zamīndār of Warad created a disturbance. Pāndu was succeeded by his son Karnū who was in possession at the 30 years' settlement, and the present zamīndār, Tulsīram, is Karnū's grandson. He is 45 and lives at Tirkhedī, 4 miles from Sālekasā station. He has been wasteful in respect of his forest management. The population of Tirkhedī is 2855, while Mālpuri has only 875 persons. Three villages are held by inferior proprietors in each estate in Mālpuri, while the zamīndār manages three villages in Mālpuri and one in Tirkhedī. The village of Asolpāni in Mālpuri has been sold outright. The zamīndār's income was taken at Rs 3000 in Tirkhedī and a *takolī* of Rs. 950 was assessed; in Mālpuri a *takolī* of Rs. 650 was assessed on an estimated income of Rs. 2000, while on the village of Asolpāni the full *kāmil-jamā* of Rs. 145 was made payable. In 1906-07 the combined *takolī* was Rs. 1510 and cesses came to Rs. 75.

Description.

Tirora Tahsil.—The northern tahsīl of the District, lying between 21° 10′ and 21° 47′ North and 79° 43′ and 80° 40′ East. It is bounded by Bhandāra tahsil on the west, Bālāghāt District on the north, Nāndgaon to the east and Sākoli tahsīl to the south. Its area is 1328 square miles or 34 per cent. of that of the District and it contains 13 zamīndāri estates with a total area of 720 square miles. The tahsīl consists roughly of an open level tract of rice-growing land with forests towards the eastern border. In its southern portion the Gaikhuri range runs from the east of Bhandāra town to the railway near Gondia. In the east the Sātpur range takes in the corner of the tahsīl formed by the Sāle-

kasā and Darekasā zamīndāris, where the villages consist mainly of jungle clearings lying in an undeveloped country with a poor sandy soil. The country round Rāmpailī in the north is the most fertile part of the tahsīl, and some good villages also lie along the banks of the Waingangā further south.

Population.

The population in 1901 was 291,514 persons or 44 per cent. of that of the District. Tirorā thus contains not much less than half of the total population. In 1891 the population was 334,579 and in 1881, 292,046. The increase between 1881 and 1891 was nearly 15 per cent. and the decrease in the last decade 13 per cent The zamīndāris have a population of 160,570 persons. The density of population is 220 persons per square mile, the tahsīl being more thickly peopled than either Bhandāra or Sākoli. There are no towns but a large number of flourishing villages. In 1901, the following six villages contained more than 2000 persons:—Gondia (4457), Tirorā (3640), Amgaon (2737), Phulchur (2150), Kardī (2139) and Mūndhrī (2095). In addition to these no less than 49 villages contained between 1000 and 2000 persons. The total number of villages is 603, of which 35 are uninhabited.

Agriculture.

Of the total mālguzāri area 76 square miles or 14 per cent. are occupied by Government forest, and another 73 square miles or 13 per cent. by private forest and grass land. In the zamīndāris 164 square miles or 21 per cent. of the total are under forest. Of the village area of 1332 square miles, including the zamīndāris, a proportion of 58 per cent. was occupied for cultivation in 1905-06 or about the same as at settlement. The cultivated area was 421,000 acres and the gross cropped area 495,000, of which 127,000 were double-cropped. The principal statistics of cropping at settlement and during the years 1900—06 are shown on the next page.

Statistics of cropping, Tirora.

Year.	Wheat.	Rice.	Juār.	Linseed.	Kodon-kutkī.	Gram.	Tiurā lākh.	Urad, mūng and moth.	Til.	Cotton.	Sugarcane.	Double-cropped area.	Total cropped area (*b*).	Irrigated area.
	Acres. (*a*)	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
At last settlement ...	24,222	262,679	18,250	10,175	16,534	12,898	...	...	...	...	698	44,557	408,728	86,823
1900-01 ...	26,360	211,818	33,968	26,186	27,703	22,241	40,943	19,433	1,862	57	321	80,316	317,740	83,328
1901-02 ...	15,511	216,278	29,144	30,948	28,706	18,042	35,287	13,092	2,033	74	385	75,215	417,085	110,000
1902-03 ...	13,230	183,152	27,592	9,452	21,274	18,329	16,874	6,941	897	88	324	24,823	240,847	38,839
1903-04 ...	19,521	216,408	27,150	43,041	40,336	23,267	52,764	34,175	1,714	1,036	342	120,513	490,830	25,551
1904-05 ...	24,256	221,560	21,074	38,419	27,515	24,803	49,461	25,494	1,227	1,482	376	102,661	469,686	70,054
1905-06 ...	23,676	236,245	20,143	40,717	26,391	23,648	62,945	30,050	1,100	1,586	399	127,310	495,271	100,495
Percentage of area under each crop on the total cropped area in 1905-06.	5	48	4	8	5	5	13	6	·2	·3	...	...	...	...

(*a*) Includes wheat-gram.
(*b*) Includes double-cropped area.

The net cropped area increased from 364,000 acres at settlement to 368,000 in 1905-06. The main crop of the tahsīl is rice which covers 64 per cent. of the net cropped area, and a large proportion of this is transplanted and irrigated from tanks and ponds. The finer varieties are usually produced for the local export trade to Nāgpur and Berār and some coarse rice is even said to be imported from Chhattīsgarh for consumption. The irrigated area was 190,000 acres in 1905-06. The principal crops are linseed, gram and the pulses urad, lākh and *lākhori*, which are grown as after-crops in the damp rice fields. The production of sugarcane is now insignificant.

Land Revenue.

The demand for land revenue at the 30 years' settlement was Rs. 1·90 lakhs and it was raised at the recent settlement to Rs. 2·95 lakhs, giving an increase of Rs 103,000 or 54 per cent. on the revenue immediately prior to revision. The revised revenue fell at 56 per cent. of the assets, which amounted to Rs. 5·23 lakhs, the cash rental being Rs. 3·74 lakhs. The *kāmil-jamā* of the zamīndāris was estimated at Rs. 1·57 lakhs and on this a *takolī* of Rs. 106,000 was fixed. Since the settlement some reductions have been made in the revenue[1] and the demand in 1905-06 was Rs. 2·34 lakhs, the cesses now amounting to Rs. 13,000.

Miscellaneous.

At the 30 years' settlement the tahsīl was divided into the following parganas :—Tirorā with 171 villages, Rāmpailī with 85, and Kāmtha with 320, while 27 villages were included in the Chāndpur pargana of the Bhandāra tahsīl. At last settlement the following assessment groups were formed, the number of villages contained by each being shown in brackets against it :—Katorī (53), Tirorā (81), Rāmpailī (77), Chorkhamāra (52), Saolī-Dongargaon (55), Warad (39), Amgaon (50), Kāmtha (60), Phulchur (69) and Bijlī (67). The average rent-rate was R. 1-0-2 and the revenue rate R. 0-10-9. The

[1] See para. 164.

Chorkhamāra group had the highest rent-rate of R. 1-2-6 and the Sālekasā zamīndāri group the lowest, of R. 0-5-6.

The tahsīl is divided into three Revenue Inspectors' circles with headquarters at Tirorā, Rāmpailī and Amgaon and into 86 patwāris' circles. It has two police Station-houses with headquarters at Tirorā and Gondia and seven outposts.

Tirora village.—The headquarters of the Tirorā tahsīl, situated on the Bengal-Nāgpur railway, 23 miles from Bhandāra Road station and 30 miles from Bhandāra by road. Its area is 2000 acres and the population in 1901 was 3600, having increased by about 200 persons during the preceding decade. The village is a mile from the station and is divided into two parts called the new and old *bastīs*, which are separated by a tank. The new town is built round the tahsīl office. An important rice market is held on Sundays. A considerable industry in the manufacture of *bīris* or native cigarettes has lately sprung up at Tirorā, and about 1000 people are now employed in it. The tobacco is imported from Madras and Assam and is rolled in leaves of the *tendū* tree (*Diospyros tomentosa*), which burn with a pleasant flavour. The cigarettes are sold wholesale at an anna a hundred or even more cheaply, and are exported to neighbouring Districts and to Berār. Men, women and children are engaged in the industry, being employed by several manufacturers. Tirorā has a vernacular middle school with 140 pupils enrolled in 1906, a police Station-house, a branch post office and a dispensary. An inspection bungalow and a *sarai* have been erected near the station. The proprietor is a Brāhman lady.

Tumsar Town.—A town in the Bhandāra tahsīl, situated in 21° 23′ N. and 79° 46′ E. on the Bengal-Nāgpur railway, 27 miles from Bhandāra and 570 from Bombay. The town is 3 miles from the station. The village area is 3813 acres, of which 25 are Government land. The population in the last four years of census was as follows:—*1872*, 7367; *1881*, 7388; *1891*, 7566; *1901*, 8292. In 1901 the

population included 555 Muhammadans. The town has a good situation and is well laid out with broad streets. It is surrounded by numerous groves of mango trees which lend it an attractive appearance. The principal buildings are a fine Muhammadan mosque and two Hindu temples and a large Jain temple and garden. The water-supply is obtained from wells and from a large municipal tank. Tumsar was created a municipality in 1867 and the average receipts for the decade ending 1901 were Rs. 5000. In 1904-05 the income had fallen to Rs. 4600, being principally derived from a property tax and market dues. This last source of income has been curtailed by the recent bad seasons. The town is a centre of the grain trade and has a municipal *ganj* or covered grain market. The principal staple is rice, the crop grown in the neighbourhood of Tumsar having a high reputation. There is a considerable output of manganese from the mines in the vicinity, and a tramway has been constructed by the Central India Mining Company from Tumsar road through Tumsar to Bondkatā on the Bāwantharī, a distance of 23 miles. It will be extended to the mines beyond the river. A branch railway is also projected from Tumsar to Katangī and Bālāghāt. Cart-wheels are largely made in Tumsar and exported to the surrounding Districts and Berār. The hubs are usually made of *babūl* wood and the rest of the wheel of teak. A pair of wheels without iron bands on the hubs may cost about Rs. 20, while those with iron bands are more expensive. Large quantities of country cloth are woven in the surrounding villages, the sales of thread to the weavers being said to aggregate about three lakhs annually. White loin-cloths with red borders for men are chiefly produced. Silk-bordered cloths with silver-gilt thread are also woven. The town has a covered market-place, called *Bāradwāri* as it has 12 openings. A bazar for the sale of cart-wheels takes place on Tuesdays, and a cloth market on Wednesdays. Tumsar has a vernacular middle school with 287 pupils enrolled in 1906, a girls' school and a dispensary. There are

also post and telegraph offices, a police Station-house and a *sarai* and an inspection bungalow for officers. The proprietors are a Ponwār family whose estate has been under the management of the Court of Wards for a long period.

Turmapuri Zamindari.—This estate is situated in the Sākoli tahsīl about 5 miles north of Sākoli. It has an area of 14 square miles, of which three-quarters is forest, and contains seven villages, three of these being held by *thekādārs*, while two are uninhabited. The population in 1901 was 777, having decreased by 33 per cent. during the previous decade. The cropped area is about 1200 acres. The estate has been in the hands of the present family since 1732, and was apparently originally granted by the Gond Rājā of Mandlā. The family belong to the Māna caste, and the present representative is Mussammāt Kankū, widow of Sūkal Bāpu. She is about 30 years old and is illiterate. The estate is involved. During the recent conciliation proceedings in 1905 the debt due by the zamīndāri was reduced from Rs. 1015 to Rs. 756 and made payable by instalments. The income at settlement was taken at Rs. 1750, on which a *takolī* of Rs. 750 was assessed. The same sum was payable in 1906-07 with Rs. 41 for cesses.

Umri Zamindari.—This estate is situated in the Sākoli tahsīl lying east, west and south-east of the Nawegaon lake. Its area is 17 square miles, and about half of it is under forest, but there is no valuable timber. The estate is said to have been conferred on the founder of the family for proficiency in wrestling and for having tamed a wild elephant, and a deed was given in 1775 by the Nāgpur Rājā to Najak Rām, then the proprietor, stating that the estate had been granted to him long before, on condition of his serving in the Partābgarh fort with five men; and conferring it again on him free of all revenue demand. Subsequently however a payment of Rs. 500 was imposed. The family are Mānas and are now heavily involved owing to the defalcations of a former manager, who raised money for his private purposes

on the security of the estate. He was on one occasion imprisoned for attempting to bribe a magistrate. The present zamīndār is Bāji Rao Bāpu, a man of about 30 years of age. He is illiterate and lives at Umrī, 16 miles from Sākoli. During the recent conciliation proceedings in 1905 the debts were reduced from Rs. 6000 to Rs. 3000. The whole zamīndāri was mortgaged and one village is likely to be sold. The zamīndāri contains 13 villages, of which 3 are held by inferior proprietors and 5 by lessees. The population in 1901 was 1697 persons. The village of Jāmli on the Nawegaon lake contains some good forest. The income at settlement was found to be Rs. 2000, on which a *takolī* of Rs. 1000 was assessed. In 1906-07 the revenue demand was Rs. 971 with Rs. 53 for cesses.

Wainganga River.[1]—(Lit. "The Arrow of Water"). A river in the Central Provinces which rises near the village of Partābpur or Mundāra (21° 57′ N. and 79° 34′ E.), 11 miles from the town of Seonī on the Sātpurā plateau, and flows in a wide half circle, bending and winding among the spurs of the hills, from the west to the east of the Seonī District. Here it is diverted to the south, being joined by the Thānwar river from Mandlā, and forms the boundary of Seonī for some miles until it enters Bālāghāt. The upper valley, at first stony and confined, becomes later an alternation of rich alluvial basins and narrow gorges, until, at the eastern border of Seonī, the river commences its descent to the lower country, passing over a series of rapids and deep stony channels, overhung by walls of granite, 200 feet high. The course of the Waingangā during the last six miles before its junction with the Thānwar may perhaps be ranked next to the Bherāghāt gorge of the Nerbudda for beauty of river scenery in the Central Provinces. Emerging subsequently from the hills the river flows south and south-west through the rich rice lands of the Bālāghāt and Bhandāra Districts,

[1] The article on the Waingangā river is a reprint from the draft article for the Imperial Gazetteer.

passing the towns of Bālāghāt, Tumsar, Bhandāra and Paunī, and receiving the waters of numerous affluents. Of these the principal are the Bāgh in Bālāghāt, the Bāwantharī, Kanhān and Chūlband in Bhandāra and the Gārhvi in Chānda. It then flows through Chānda and after a course of 360 miles joins the Wardhā at Seonī on the south-western border of that District. The river formed by the confluence of the Wardhā and Waingangā is known as the Prānhita and is a tributary of the Godāvari. In the Seonī and Bālāghāt Districts the bed of the Waingangā is a series of basalt ridges with deep pools held up behind them, while in the hot weather the river shrinks to a narrow stream trickling between the indentations of the ridges. Below Bālāghāt its bed is generally broad and sandy, interspersed with occasional barriers of rock. In the first part of its course through Bhandāra the valley of the Waingangā is rather narrow. But after stretching for thirty miles the valley opens out and the hills on either side recede. At Chīzgaon near Hattā and at Tiddī close to the confluence of the Kanhān are rocky barriers. The length of the river in the Bhandāra District is nearly 150 miles, and its width is generally about 500 yards, but opposite Paunī it broadens to half a mile. In the hot weather the stream is nearly everywhere fordable, but during the rainy season the swollen rapid river presents a striking sight. During the flood season the Waingangā is navigable for light canoes from the confluence of the Bāgh as far as Garhchirolī in Chānda, though one or two barriers of rock impede traffic. Timber is floated down it and grain and vegetables are carried for short distances by boat. No use is made of the river for purposes of irrigation. The drainage area of the Waingangā includes the east of the Nāgpur plain and also the bulk of the Districts of Seonī and Chhindwāra, whose waters are brought to it by the Pench and Kanhān rivers. It is crossed by the narrow-gauge Sātpurā railway near Keolāri, by the main line of the Bengal-Nāgpur railway near Nawegaon in Bhandāra, and by a fine stone bridge

at Chhapāra on the Seonī-Jubbulpore road. An annual fair is held at its source at Mundāra. The curiously winding and circuitous course of the Waingangā through the Seonī District is thus accounted for by a Hindu legend Once upon a time there lived a certain Rājā in the Bhandāra District, who had a talisman; and the effect of the talisman was, that daily, when he put it in his mouth, he could be transported to Allahābād to bathe in the Ganges. But after he had done this daily for a long time, the Ganges said to him that it was a great labour for him to come every day to Allahābād to bathe in its waters; and that if he filled a bottle with its water and laid it down by his house, a new stream would flow whose water would be that of the Ganges, and bathing in which would confer the same religious efficacy. So the Rājā thanked the river, and joyfully took a bottle of the water. But on his way home, while stopping to rest at Partābpur, the present source of the Waingangā, he inadvertently laid the bottle on the ground Instantly a stream issued forth from it and began to flow. The dismayed Rājā then besought the river saying that this place was far from his home, and he would not be able to come there and bathe. So the river pitying him, changed its course, and flowed north, east, and south in a wide half circle, until it passed through Bhandāra by the Rājā's house.

Warad Zamindari.—This estate lies in the Tirorā tahsīl between Tirorā and Kāmtha to the south of the Waingangā. It has an area of 70 square miles and contains 32 villages. The country is well populated and contains some first-rate soil. The estate was first granted by the Deogarh Rājā to a Ponwār, but in 1815 the family was ejected for misrule and participation in dacoities and it was made over to Narbad Lodhī of Bijlī to whom the Kāmtha estate was given three years afterwards. Warad is now held by the Kāmtha zamindār family. The population in 1901 was 19,191 persons, having decreased by 18 per cent. during the previous decade. Of the 32 villages, 13 are held by

inferior proprietors, and 4 by lessees. The assets at settlement were found to be Rs. 36,000 and the *takolī* was fixed at Rs. 17,000, being estimated at 47 per cent. of the assets. The income is principally derived from the rental of tenants. In 1906-07 the demand for land revenue was Rs. 16,000 and for cesses Rs. 870.

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